

TENNIS PAGE



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THE TIMES

No. 64,472

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 1992

50p

London hospital workers fight to save jobs

By Jill Sherman and Jeremy Laurence

THE government was last night facing a fresh political storm as health service workers pledged to campaign vigorously against plans to close some of London's top hospitals with the loss of up to 20,000 jobs.

The proposals in the long awaited report from Sir Bernard Tomlinson could lead to a wave of industrial action as well as a political furor as intense as that over the pit closures. Fifteen hospitals should be closed or merged, with the loss of 2,500 beds, and the money saved switched into community health services, the enquiry concluded.

The closures would mean the loss of some of the most famous teaching hospitals including St. Bartholomew's and Charing Cross, and the merger of Guy's with St. Thomas'. The closures



Bottomley: "Too many hospitals"

and mergers would free 11 sites or part sites, which should be sold or used for medical purposes, the enquiry says.

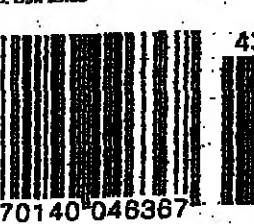
Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, made clear yesterday that she accepted the thrust of the proposals and would approve hospitals being closed. "The government accepts that London has too many hospitals and too many beds," she said. Health ministers have made clear that no decisions will be made without consultation - contrasting with the original pit closure programme. Labour MPs accused the government of using the report as an excuse for health service cuts rather than improving services.

Sir Bernard yesterday emphasised the need for extra investment in GP and community health services.

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Convicted: Jean-Pierre Allain, director of East Anglia's transfusion service, leaving court in Paris yesterday after being sentenced to four years

Major yields to new Euro-sceptic revolt

By Sheila Gunn
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major attempted to head off opposition from Conservative Euro-sceptic MPs yesterday by conceding that the bill to ratify the Maastricht treaty would not be rushed through Parliament before Christmas.

Following warnings from the executive of the backbench 1922 committee on Thursday night, Mr Major decided to relax the timetable for the bill's ratification in order to allow room for extended debate on the economy.

But Lord Tebbit, veteran campaigner for the Euro-sceptics, urged MPs not to be swayed by any threat from the prime minister to resign if Britain failed to ratify the treaty. He said that the replacement of Mr Major was not "too difficult" a matter.

"Maastricht is more important than any individual and, therefore, whether the prime minister would resign or not is not material in the terms of the debate," he said.

It was Lord Tebbit's belief that Mr Major's resignation would not result in a general election. The prime minister, he said, had "tied himself" to David Mellor, the European exchange-rate mechanism and pit closures, but had stood by none of them.

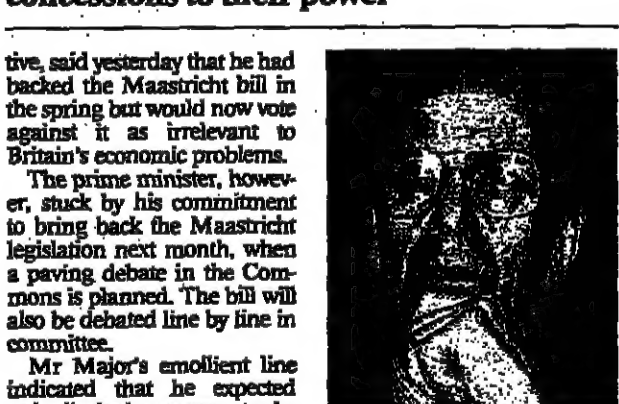
To add to the government's troubles, Sir Rhodes Boyson, a member of the 1922 executive, said yesterday that he had backed the Maastricht bill in the spring but would now vote against it as irrelevant to Britain's economic problems.

The prime minister, however, stuck by his commitment to bring back the Maastricht legislation next month, when a paving debate in the Commons is planned. The bill will also be debated line by line in committee.

Mr Major's emollient line indicated that he expected only limited progress to be made before Christmas. He told senior Tories that the bill would not be "railroaded" through the Commons.

But this makes it unlikely that Britain will ratify before Denmark holds a second referendum next year. As a small concession to senior Tory backbenchers who have called for the bill to be held back until next year, the prime minister has promised an early and extended debate on the Autumn Statement, setting out the government's spending plans for next year. That is designed to appease MPs who question the prime minister's decision, to make the ratification process his

Tory backbenchers are beginning to flex new-found muscles — this time on the Maastricht treaty — and the prime minister is already making more concessions to their power



Lord Tebbit: Major's resignation unimportant

priority at a time of a deepening economic recession. After talks between Mr Major and Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the 1922 committee, Downing Street made clear yesterday that work on the bill would be interspersed with debates on other measures.

However, the decision for slower progress on the Maastricht bill is seen as recognition by Mr Major that, as his whips have warned him, Conservative MPs cannot be forced to endure long or all-night sittings for days on end.

Backbench power, page 8

Not Today thank you, say Mirror staff to new chief

By Brian MacArthur

JOURNALISTS on the *Daily Mirror* stopped working yesterday in protest at the appointment of David Montgomery, a former editor of the *News of the World* and *Today*, as the new chief executive of Mirror Group Newspapers and it was unlikely last night that the paper would be published today.

A meeting of journalists and secretaries on the *Mirror* and its two sister Sunday papers, the *Sunday Mirror* and *The People*, voted by 249-3 to stop work until the unpopular appointment of Mr Montgomery had been revoked. Journalists claimed that Mr Montgomery was a "sucker and union-buster". A union statement said that his

style of editorship, learnt while editing Murdoch newspapers, was entirely hostile to everything the *Daily Mirror* stood for.

Mr Montgomery, an Ulster Protestant who started his Fleet Street career on the *Daily Mirror* in 1973, is expected to implement a ruthless programme to cut costs, mainly by sacking editorial and production staff, so that the profits of MGN are boosted before it is sold.

Mr Montgomery's first editorial victim was Joe Haines, the *Mirror's* former leader writer, who resigned rather

than work with him. Mr Haines once wrote of Mr Montgomery: "Fleet Street had some bad editors, but to be a liar, a thief, a hypocrite, a bigot and a pornographer is to be unique. Montgomery of Alamein is an honoured Anglo-Irish name. Montgomery of Wapping is a scandal."

He has made few friends and many enemies on his rise through Fleet Street. His ruthless management style made him unpopular. His new appointment is the culmination of a career founded on single-minded determination, an extraordinary dedication to hard work and an uncanny ability to come back from seemingly impossible reverses.

Diary, page 14

El Alamein remembered

John Major flew out to Egypt yesterday to take part in the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein, a decisive engagement in the second world war in which General Montgomery's 8th Army defeated German and Italian forces under Field Marshal Rommel. The prime minister will also meet President Mubarak in Cairo today for talks on achieving more stability in the Middle East.

Speaking on Channel Four news, he said he believed that the bulk of the Tory party agreed with him. He also hoped for "some decent progress" on the bill by Christmas.

Leading article, page 15

China warns Britain

As Chris Patten ended his three-day visit to Peking yesterday, China gave a thinly veiled hint that it might force more stability in the Middle East.

China warns Britain, page 13

BA buys ailing Dan-Air for £1

By Harvey Elliott
AIR CORRESPONDENT

DAN-AIR, Britain's oldest airline, was sold yesterday for £1 to British Airways.

More than 1,400 staff based at Gatwick will lose their jobs and the name Dan-Air will disappear as it is absorbed into a new low-cost operation combining BA's existing European services and some of Dan-Air's scheduled routes.

Passengers booked to fly with Dan-Air, either on charter or scheduled services, will have their tickets honoured and be transferred either onto other carriers or the continued Dan-Air scheduled services.

The agreement came after three days of almost non-stop

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Shareholders in Davies & Newman, the Dan-Air holding company, have been left with nothing after the sale of most of the company assets to British Airways, despite several cash injections into the ailing airline. The shares remain suspended and are effectively worthless. Page 19

negotiations and pressure from Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade, and John MacGregor, the transport secretary, who were determined to avoid another embarrassing airline collapse that could have left thousands of passengers stranded.

Under the terms of the deal, British Airways has agreed to settle the liabilities of Dan-Air's parent company, Davies and Newman, which will be wound up. The total cost to BA, including redundancy payments, will be between £30 million and £35 million. The entire charter operation will be disbanded and aircraft returned or sold. Between 400 and 600 of Dan-Air's permanent staff of 2,000 will be kept on and the rest will be made redundant.

The agreement is subject to approval by the regulatory authorities and rival airlines such as Britannia, British Midland and Virgin are demanding an enquiry.

Lord King of Warraby, the BA chairman, said last night that the deal was preferable to receivership and complete shutdown. David James, Dan-Air chairman and company doctor, said that the outcome was unfortunate but insisted that it was better than receivership.

Frantic Maydays, page 7
Shareholders lose, page 19

Blood bank chief jailed for role in HIV scandal

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS

THE former director of the French transfusion service was sentenced to four years' jail yesterday for allowing blood contaminated with HIV to be given to hundreds of haemophiliacs. In an epilogue to a scandal that has tainted ministers and brought disgrace on the French health system, the court also sentenced Jean-Pierre Allain, professor of transfusional medicine at Cambridge University, to four years in prison, two of them suspended.

Michel Garretta, an ambitious career administrator, was absent from the 16th Correctional Chamber for the verdicts, an emotional session attended by families of victims and haemophiliacs who have contracted the HIV virus from transfusions. Two hundred and fifty-six have died from Aids since Garretta ordered blood stocks to be used for several months in 1985 to save money and national pride despite knowing they were contaminated. The three-judge court issued a warrant for Garretta's arrest but his lawyer said he was returning voluntarily from Boston and was expected to appeal.

Militants from the Aids organisation, Act-Up, protested as the families denounced the verdicts as a travesty, demanding action against ministers at the time. Last week a parliamentary committee rejected a call to impeach Laurent Fabius, the former prime minister, Georgina Dufoux, the former health minister and Edmond Hervé, her former deputy. Without impeachment ministers cannot be prosecuted for actions committed in the course of their duties. Magistrates are considering demands by the families for poisoning charges to be brought against Garretta and the other administrators.

Garretta and Allain, the blood centre's former research director, were charged with "deception over the basic qualities of a product", an offence usually applied to the sale of consumer goods and foodstuffs. Garretta's penalty was the maximum allowed. He was also fined 500,000 francs (£60,000) and his service was ordered to pay more than £1 million in damages.

Jacques Roux, the former director of the health division of the justice ministry, was given a suspended sentence of four years for "non-assistance to a person in danger". Robert Netter, the former director of the National Health Laboratory, was acquitted on the same charge.

In the seven-week trial last summer, prosecutors painted Garretta, 46, as a cold-hearted bully who refused to dispose of the centre's expensive stocks, or buy foreign equipment to decontaminate blood waiting instead for the Pasteur Institute to develop its own system. The court heard harrowing testimony from ailing patients. Parents and wives described their sense of betrayal at the hands of the medical establishment as they watched their kin die.

The judges ruled that Garretta, who is not a medical practitioner or an Aids expert, was "unquestionably the inspirer and the prime mover" of the transfusion policy and he benefited from the complexity of Allain, a blood specialist. Allain, who is also policy director of the East Anglian transfusion centre, said yesterday that he was a scapegoat for policy decisions by higher officials. "I was convicted by the press and the public before the trial," he said.

Garretta maintained throughout his trial that he

Continued on page 3, col 5

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services in inner London and hospital services outside London.

Nursing staff were angry yesterday that they had not been aware earlier of the closure plans.

Tomlinson: thrust of plans accepted

The same holiday for less.

A report on the BBC (October 22) stated that the government had no plans to replace Sir Michael Checkland, the director-general; the reference should have been to Marmaduke Hussey, chairman of the governors. The error occurred in editing the report.

PC escapes jail term after paralysing boy in hit-and-run crash

By A Staff Reporter

AN OFF-DUTY policeman who paralysed a schoolboy in a hit-and-run car crash was fined £3,800 and banned from driving for seven years yesterday. A magistrate told PC Anthony Metcalfe, 29, who had been drinking before the accident, that he wished he could jail him for his "abominable" crime.

Andrew Ward, 14, suffered horrific head injuries and was left paralysed, unable to communicate and completely dependent on his parents. Anthony Metcalfe, for the prosecution, told Liverpool magistrates that a witness had heard a noise and looked out of his window to see a car driving at high speed and a figure being flung through the air and landing on a grass verge.

"Andrew suffered extremely serious injuries and was in a critical condition for some time," Mr. Metcalfe said. "He was in hospital for six months afterwards and still attends as

an outpatient. He is unable to speak and has no independent daily living."

"The defendant was driving the car without due care and attention and he did not inform the police of the accident until seven hours afterwards. That day he had been to a niece's christening and he said he had drunk four pints of mild. It may be that he was concerned he would be breathalysed and that is why he waited seven hours before reporting the accident."

Metcalfe, a father of three, of West Derby, Liverpool, pleaded guilty to driving his Ford Escort without due care and attention on December 1 last year. He also admitted charges of failing to stop after an accident and failing to report the accident as soon as possible.

Patrick McLoughlin, for the defence, said: "My client's brother-in-law had called him up in a state of considerable

distress, with a call for assistance which led to him driving at the time. He has been instructed not to drink too much alcohol because of medication for a blood-pressure problem and I am instructed that he had obeyed that instruction on this day and he did not wish to outrun the breathalyser."

Mr. McLoughlin added: "Mr. Metcalfe did not offer any explanation as to why he failed to stop and so I am unable to do so. My client has already indicated he ought to have seen this young boy much earlier — it was a matter of momentary inattention. He wants to express his deep regret and hopes that a full recovery may be possible."

Stipendiary magistrate David Tapp said: "This is indeed a tragic case and I would like to extend my sincere sympathy to the family of Andrew, although I realise it won't help them with their difficulties and suffering."

"But my powers in this case are severely limited and I have to sentence on the degree of carelessness and not on the consequences. It is difficult for me to imagine a worse case of careless driving, or a worse case of failing to stop and failing to report an accident."

He told Metcalfe: "If I had the power to, then I would have committed you to prison for the longest term possible so you could realise the seriousness with which I view this case. I suppose you will pick up the pieces of the rest of your life, but the family of Andrew will find that very difficult."

"I have found it very difficult to find any mitigation. I am satisfied that you were travelling at a grossly excessive speed. You hit this boy and left him lying in the road so you could avoid a family squabble. That is difficult to comprehend. Your driving was so abominable that I am also going to disqualify you until you can pass a test."

Andrew's father, William, 45, of West Derby, said after the hearing: "I cannot say I am happy, but the magistrate did everything he could within his powers. The doctors cannot say whether there is any chance of recovery. Progress is very slow and they can't give us any hope. It is all up to Andrew." His wife Anne, 45, is on a pilgrimage to Lourdes with her son.

Merseyside police will now decide whether Metcalfe should lose his job. A spokesman for the force said: "The officer has been served with disciplinary papers according to legal procedures at the conclusion of court proceedings. Normal disciplinary procedures will now take place."

Young lonely hearts seek love in church

By RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION
CORRESPONDENT

SINGLE people are turning to the church to find marriage partners, according to a report published today. Its authors say that churches are increasingly popular as a place to meet partners because young men and women know they will not be pressured into premarital sex and one-night stands.

The report, published by the Evangelical Alliance, criticises churches for failing to cater adequately for the large numbers of young, single people turning to God. It says that churches are prejudiced against single people and promote married life as not just the norm but as superior to being single.

Steve Chilcraft, a research consultant and author of the report, said that in spite of the failure to cater adequately for them, single people, of whom there were more than many realised, were turning to the church because of an "endemic loneliness" which meant they had nowhere else to go to feel safe.

"Most single people who go to church are not the sort who are likely to go to a singles' bar or disco at the local pub. The image of those places is to find a sexual partner," Mr. Chilcraft said. "Single Christians believe in sex within marriage and not outside it or before it. These people seek to uphold traditional views of marriage and morality, but nonetheless want to be able to form good permanent relationships with other people. The church is a natural place for them to do this."

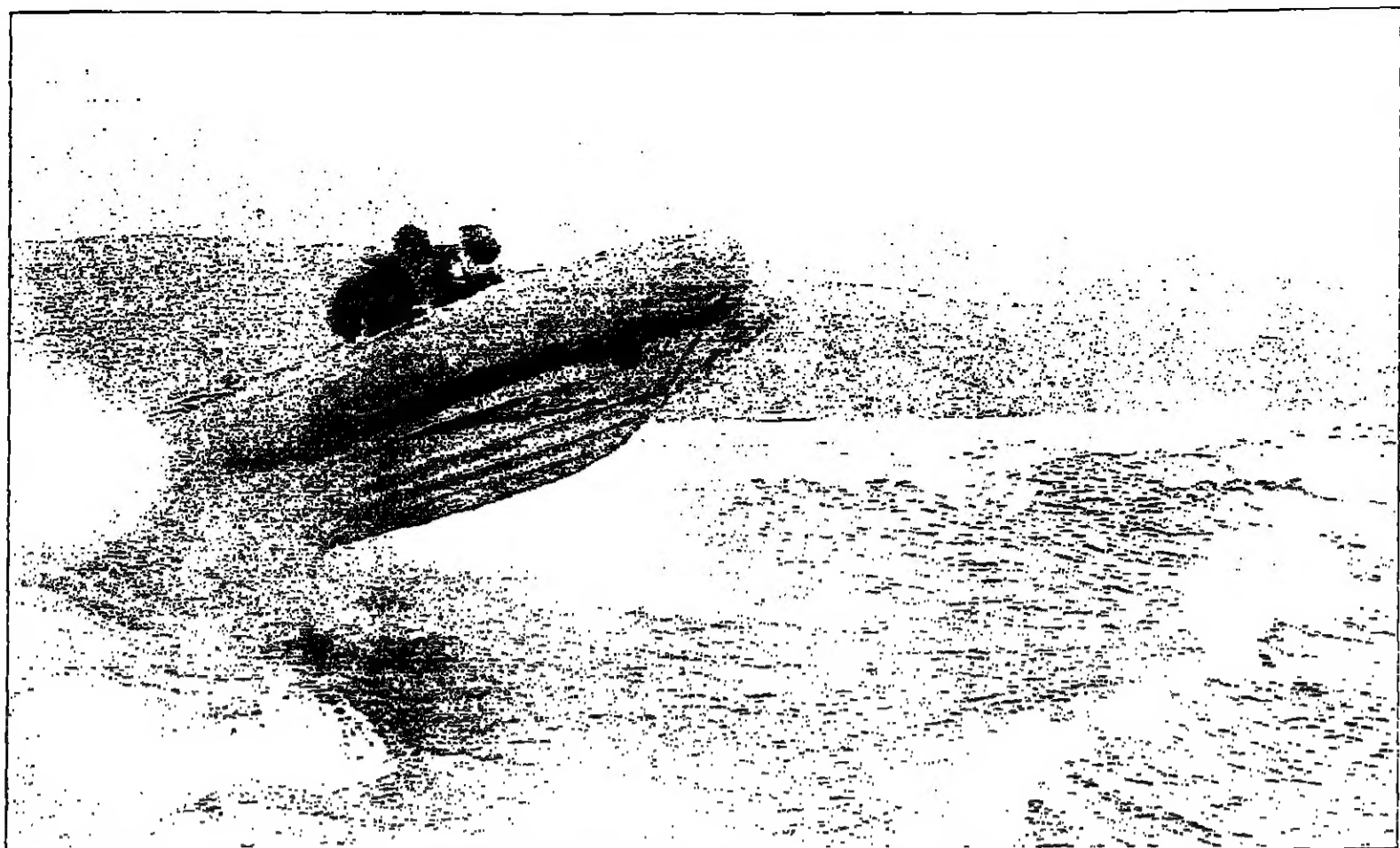
The survey, of 300 clergy and ministers serving nearly 37,000 evangelical churches of different denominations, found that one third of



adult church members were single and nearly half were under 30. But single people were rarely given leadership, and were sidelined instead to youth work, babysitting and taking Sunday school classes.

Although nationally one household in four (nearly six million people) consists of one person, only one in five of the ministers and clergy surveyed thought that they served single people well.

Mr. Chilcraft called for "single services". Traditions such as Mothering Sunday and family services could leave single people feeling like second-class citizens, he said.



Sea watch: men of the Special Boat Service training at Faslane to intercept protesters' boats as the nuclear submarine Vanguard, first of the Trident class to be built at Barrow-in-Furness, headed for the Clyde base from Barrow. She had slipped out to sea on yesterday's early tide to

protests from anti-nuclear campaigners (Ronald Faux writes). The narrow channel between Walney Island and the mainland was declared an exclusion zone, foiling plans for a seaborne protest. Police stopped vehicles towing rubber boats and told protesters that for safety reasons no

boats could be launched from the shore while Vanguard was making its way from the VSEL yard to open water. One protester said that police confiscated the keys to his van and kept them for half an hour. Helen Fenton, a sales assistant from Hackney, northeast London, and a CND

member, said the plan had been to go alongside Vanguard with flags and banners. "We were not going to block it because that would have been too dangerous. We just wanted to alert people to what is going on." A bigger protest is planned at Faslane, Vanguard's base, during sea trials.

French blood transfusion trial

Cambridge professor convicted

By JOHN SHAW

EAST Anglian Regional Health Authority is to set up an independent enquiry into the role of a Cambridge University blood transfusion specialist who was convicted in France yesterday for his part in allowing HIV-infected blood to be given to French haemophiliacs.

Professor Jean-Pierre Allain, 50, professor of transfusion medicine at Cambridge and director of the East Anglian regional blood transfusion service, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, with two years suspended, for deception. He intended to return to Cambridge last night. He has stepped down from his health authority post pending the enquiry.

Sir Colin Walker, chairman of the East Anglian Regional Health Authority, said that the verdict "will come as a severe disappointment to Professor Allain's clinical and academic colleagues. The issues involved are complex and we are bound to look carefully at the written judgment. We share the concern of everyone for all those so tragically affected by HIV."

The authority will be establishing an independent enquiry to review the implications of

the French director of East Anglia's transfusion service has stepped down after yesterday's verdicts pending a health authority enquiry into his future

after the allegations in France had been made. He has always denied them. He issued a statement through Professor Robin Carr, head of the department of haematology at Cambridge, after the hearing in Paris yesterday. He said: "My plan is to return to England today. I understand that the judgment may raise concern to the British public about my ability to carry out my duty as director

of the East Anglian region of the Blood Transfusion Centre. "I have therefore decided to step down from my clinical responsibilities until an appropriate committee of impartial and qualified professionals examines the evidence and provides an independent opinion to guide the regional health service. I am absolutely confident that, through this process, my professional integrity and personal honour will be fully restored."

Professor Allain remains a professor of transfusion medicine at Cambridge University. Alasdair Liddell, general manager of the regional health authority, said that Professor Allain's offer to step down had been accepted.

Continued from page 1

was acting on orders from ministers who were aware of the implications of his policy. The most politically damning remark came from Mme Dufoix when she said, before the trial, that she felt "responsible, but not guilty."

Her remarks have come to symbolise what many see as state indifference towards individuals. The affair and the

subsequent scramble of ministers and high officials claiming ignorance of the transfusion policy has inflicted further damage on President Mitterrand's administration. It has also added to the sense of malaise in French society. The medical profession and the health service were a sector of the establishment which had still enjoyed public trust at a time when many

other branches of the paternalistic French state had been discredited.

Joelle Bouchet, whose son was among those contaminated, said that she was appalled by the court's decision to place all the blame on Garretta, rather than declaring that political officials shared responsibility. "It's disgusting," she said. "It's an insult to the sick."

Drug cash laws to be stiffened

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

CONVICTED drug traffickers are to be pursued beyond the grave under government measures announced yesterday aimed at making it easier to seize the proceeds of drugs dealing.

Bank officials and accountants with suspicions about drug money laundering could also be prosecuted if they fail to tell police of their fears.

Under a bill published yesterday, money laundering offences will be widened to include the proceeds of all other crimes. Measures to combat insider dealing in the City and tackle white collar fraud will be strengthened. Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, said the bill was aimed at drug traffickers, insider dealers and fraudsters.

Proposals in the Criminal Justice Bill include giving the courts power to confiscate the proceeds of drug dealing from convicted traffickers who have died or absconded. The standard of proof required in confiscation cases will be lessened so that it is that required in civil rather than criminal cases.

Insider dealing, page 19

Drowned boy's family hits at rescue service

The family of a drowned teenager yesterday criticised rescue services for failing to find their son's three friends, who survived after drifting in a small boat in the Bristol Channel for two days and nights last June. A search for the boys, Gareth and Stephen Evans, both 15, and Gareth Smith, 18, was abandoned almost 24 hours before they were found. Their comments came after John Owen, the Carmarthen coroner, ruled that their son, Simon Roberts, 19, a trainee accountant from Ammanford, died accidentally swimming for help. His death, he said, had also been caused by lack of safety equipment on the boys' 12ft speedboat. He said the boys might have been spotted if they had flares and lights.

Murdered girl named

A 14-year-old girl found battered to death near a golf course at Stockport, Greater Manchester, on Thursday night was named yesterday as Dawn Susan Feast of Reddish, Stockport. Police said that she had suffered many blows to the head with a blunt instrument and that a man was being questioned.

Cow disease in decline

"Mad cow" disease, which has killed more than 70,000 British cattle, may have peaked and be on the decline, according to vets who have seen large numbers of infected animals. Although nationally the incidence of BSE is still rising, South-West England, where the epidemic is most severe, has seen a marked slowing in the rate of new cases.

Plane's computer failed

An RAF Harrier pilot on exchange with the Royal Navy bombed the carrier *Ark Royal* because of a computer software anomaly, defence sources said yesterday. Five crewmen were injured when the 28th practice bomb tore through the flight deck and exploded in one of the mess decks on April 20. The pilot will be given a formal warning.

Fishermen block ports

Hundreds of fishing boats blockaded ports in Devon, North Yorkshire and Humberside yesterday in protest at legislation empowering the government to limit the days fishermen can spend at sea. The target of the fishermen's wrath is the Sea Fish (Conservation) Bill, which goes before the Lords on Monday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

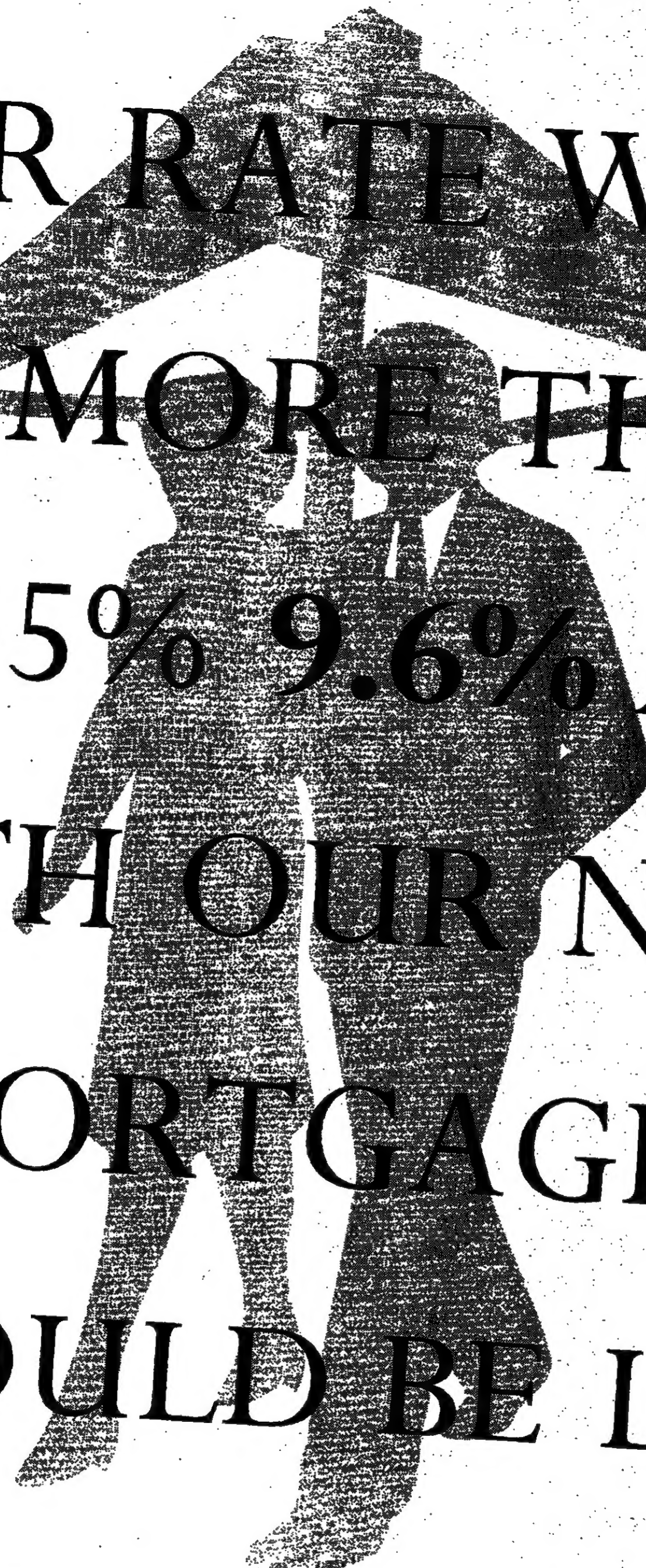
A Yank at Oxford

On the liner bound for Southampton, 22-year-old Bill Clinton marvelled at the sight of Manhattan slipping away. Leaning on the rail alongside him were some of America's most-favoured sons, Rhodes scholars bound for Oxford. For a small-town boy from



the wrong side of the tracks, Clinton knew this was a special moment; a suitably romantic departure from the country of his birth and the start of an adventure in "swinging" Britain, land of the Beatles, louche girls and old-world charm...

The truth about Bill Clinton's Oxford days — in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow



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New police commissioner

Condon vows to revive respect for the law

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

PAUL Condon, the new commissioner of the Metropolitan police, yesterday pledged himself to make London a safer and a better place to live, rebuild respect for the law and lead a police force maintaining the highest standards.



Condon: "Emphasis on ethical standards"

His aims would be to improve the security of people who live and work in London, to improve the quality of life and encourage respect for the rule of law, which meant "heavy emphasis on the ethical standards of policing in London".

Introducing Mr Condon, 45, Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, said he believed the new man would "prove to be a forceful successor to a very distinguished commissioner". Mr Clarke said London was the most difficult place in the country to police.

The city's challenges will include pushing forward reform, building community links and reducing the Yard's heavy hand of control. That must all be done with a budget of £1.5 billion and little chance of any big rise.

The Home Office will expect the force to improve its public standing and Mr Condon, who takes over in January, will take up the drive to get officers to behave more professionally to earn the public's accep-

tance. He will introduce performance indicators based on areas such as the time taken to respond or answer calls from the public. Officers are likely to be set individual performance objectives.

Mr Condon will continue the introduction of sector policing, which creates small police units close to local communities, throughout London. Kent already runs the system but London officers have started to complain at its implementation.

The new commissioner is also likely to develop plans for a reorganisation that would split London into four or five large police areas instead of the existing eight and move more officers out of the Yard, ending some specialist units such as the flying squad.

How will Mr Condon cope? One Home Office official said: "He is top notch, a superb chief constable." A senior Yard officer added: "He is very competent, has had a meteoric rise and he stands out among senior officers."

Mr Condon's record is illustrated by a glowing report by the inspectors of constabulary on his Kent force. Issued earlier this year, it concluded: "Under the able leadership of an active chief officer team, the force is well managed, vibrant, giving excellent service and is in the vanguard of change."

A mild-mannered and open man with a taste for management jargon, Mr Condon joined the Metropolitan police in 1967 and served up to chief superintendent. He was selected for rapid promotion while a sergeant, taking a law degree at Oxford on secondment. Staff officer to Sir Kenneth Newman, Sir Peter Imbert's predecessor, he was at the centre of the first reform push ten years ago.

He went to Kent in 1984 as an assistant chief constable in charge of operations. He led an operation by over a dozen forces to prevent a projected terrorist attack against Channel ferries before returning to London as a deputy assistant commissioner and then as the youngest assistant commissioner in the force's history at 41. Now he will be one of the youngest commissioners.

Amiable Imbert hid burdens of the Yard

SIR Peter Imbert will leave Scotland Yard as one of the most popular commissioners in recent times, but also as the victim of the strains of the toughest police post in the country (Stewart Tandler writes).

Two years ago he suffered a series of heart attacks. When he was taken ill, his deputy and assistant commissioners found that his diary was booked from early morning to late evening for months ahead. In recent months, the pace has quickened again.

Sir Peter's amiable and relaxed exterior has shown little sign of the strain of managing 28,000 officers, 12,000 civilians and policing eight million Londoners, guarding the royal family, protecting VIPs and combating the IRA, as well as continuing his personal ambition of reforming the Metropolitan police.

Sir Peter, the son of a Kent

farmer, joined the Metropolitan police in 1953. For much of his early career, he worked in Special Branch. He was a senior member of the bomb squad and the main negotiator at the Balcombe Street siege in 1975 when four IRA men surrendered without a shot being fired.

By 1980, he was Chief Constable of Thames Valley, where he allowed a BBC television documentary series on the force. The series brought uproar, and reform, over the treatment of rape victims and was a watershed in persuading police to become more open.

Five years later, Sir Peter returned to London as deputy commissioner. He took over from Sir Kenneth Newman in 1987 and started a drive to make the force more responsive to the public. He began the Plus programme aimed at changing the London police ethos.



Flight of fancy: Jane Whittaker, a London milliner, deserts the practical for the exotic in a hat she created for the Millennium of Millinery exhibition at The Collection gallery in Brompton Road, west London

Anglers cry foul over American intruder

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY

THE well-bred world of Scottish game fishing is witnessing an angry squabble over a vulgar American intruder — the rainbow trout.

Sir David Montgomery, 64, whose family has owned Loch Leven and its fishing rights since the sixteenth century, wishes to introduce thousands of rainbow trout to restore the loch's extensive fishing, which has declined drastically this year after parts of the water were covered by algae.

Rainbow trout, being more voracious feeders, are thought to be easier to catch in such conditions, and this

may bring back the anglers.

However, the plan has provoked fears that the rainbows will take over from the loch's wild brown trout. Lord Macninch, Scottish chairman of the Salmon and Trout Association, has complained to Scottish Natural Heritage, the government's wildlife and countryside advisory body, which has given its consent to the plan.

Sir David said that it was only a temporary measure which he would stop if it affected the brown trout.

Troubled waters
Weekend, section 3, page 3

Visit to grave ends historic royal tour

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN BERLIN

THE Queen ended her five-day state visit to Germany yesterday with a journey to Potsdam to see where Empress Frederick of Prussia, Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, was buried. She placed a bunch of yellow roses, Victoria's favourite, on the grave.

The Queen attracted large crowds wherever she went, particularly in the eastern states unused to seeing figures from the world stage unless they were from the Kremlin.

On her way to Potsdam in the former Eastern sector outside Berlin to visit Frederick the Great's Palace of Sans Souci, the royal motorcade drove past a huge Soviet

barracks, now largely empty and boarded up. Small knots of Russian officers and bored-looking soldiers peered through the gates.

A crowd of several thousand had gathered in front of Sans Souci to see the Queen walk in the grounds and take a ride in an open carriage. Among the crowd a small group of young demonstrators hoisted two banners, one reading "Britain get out of Northern Ireland" and the other "No poll tax".

At the end of the visit, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh departed for London from RAF Gatow. They left to a background of warm German media comment.

Porn videos seized at ferry port

Customs investigators seized scores of master copies of hard-core pornographic videos yesterday in a caravanette that had arrived at Dover on a ferry from France. Four Britons were arrested, a man and woman at the port and two men later in south London.

Customs officers believe that, after a two-month undercover operation, they have broken a large-scale pornographic smuggling, printing and distribution network with an estimated annual turnover from video sales of more than £1 million. A Customs and Excise spokesman said: "We managed to get the printing and distribution centres as well."

The four suspects were being questioned by customs officers in London.

Clocks go back

Clocks go back an hour at 2am tomorrow, putting Britain an hour behind the rest of Europe after a month of synchronisation, contrary to the views of more and more Britons. A recent survey by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents showed that two thirds of those questioned wanted Britain to switch permanently to Central European Time.

Poll tax debts

Councils in Scotland are owed £498 billion in unpaid poll tax, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities disclosed yesterday. £1.8 billion is still owed from 1989, an eighth of the total due that year.

Ruling delay

The High Court reserved judgment yesterday on a damages claim against London Underground by Paul Hale, a fireman, for mental injuries he suffered in the 1987 King's Cross disaster. Mr Justice Otton gave no indication when he would give his ruling on the amount of compensation to be awarded.

Costly lines

A fragment from the Koran, 24 lines of script written in the mid-seventeenth century, sold at Sotheby's in London for £159,500 — more than four times its estimate.

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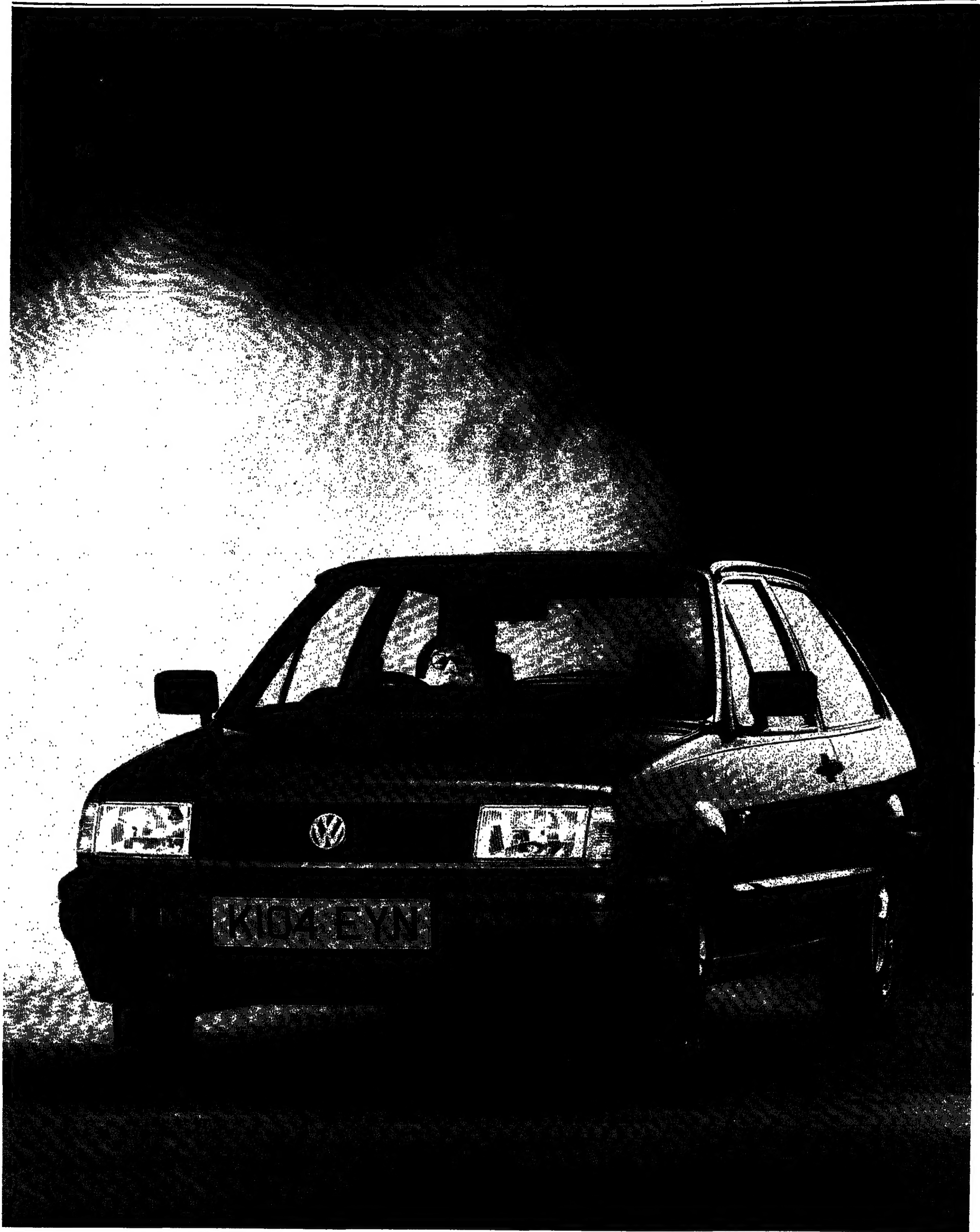
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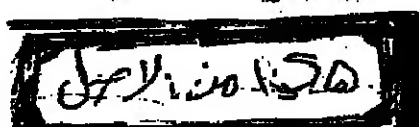
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How Churchill's change of bowling won at El Alamein

By RONNIE PAYNE

OTHER battles were greater and more decisive but for the British and their newfound allies the Americans, not to mention the oppressed people of Europe, El Alamein was a great turning point in the second world war.

Those yet unborn in that blissful dawn of victory on the October day 50 years ago when the Eighth Army surged forward will never know the ecstasy of triumph which swept over Britain. The excitement was infectious. As a schoolboy at the time, I remember listening to the church bells, silenced since 1940 in readiness to signal the beginning of a German invasion of the British Isles. Now they were acclaiming distant victory.

King George VI wrote in

الحسين
ELALAMEIN

The sign in the desert

■ The battle of El Alamein 50 years ago was a turning point in the war. "A victory at last," King George VI wrote in his diary. "How good for the nerves."

his diary, "A victory at last. How good it is for the nerves." Churchill later declared: "Before El Alamein we never had a victory. After El Alamein, we never had a defeat."

In Britain all attention had concentrated on the desert war, seen as a clean sandtable battlefield, where private armies rampaged like knights. True, the Eighth Army, after initially defeating the Italian "jackals", had eventually and unfairly been driven back by the German Afrika Korps led by Rommel, who we secretly admired as a stylish gentleman. Out there in the Western Desert things had not been going well in '42. The Eighth Army had lost Tobruk and been thrown back in a final thrust in June 1942 to a line shielding Cairo.

General Alexander managed to hold Rommel before Alamein and the Mediterranean and the Quatern

Depression. Then in August, Churchill went to Egypt to see things for himself and decided "to change the bowling". He gave command to Lieutenant-General B. L. Montgomery, a commander totally unknown to us schoolboy strategists. Seventeen days after arriving, he was ready to launch the great counter offensive.

Sticks of Sherman tanks had arrived from America and the Enigma code-breakers were supplying the commander with a mass of intelligence on the German order of battle, and Rommel was himself in hospital back in the Third Reich.

The great day came on October 23. The British bomber offensive stopped and the land battle began at 21.30 that night. At 22.00 hours the infantry began moving forward in what was blandly codenamed Opera-



Foot soldiers: members of a night patrol trying on special "silent" boots before starting out to reconnoitre positions in the battle zone

The crucial point came on the 25th when Montgomery switched the line of attack, sending the Australians with the 1st Armoured Division hooking round north before wheeling to cut the coast road and force the Germans to

commit their reserves to the sector. After days of hard pounding, the Afrika Korps began to break and by November 4, British armour reached open ground. The Afrika Korps, defeated in battle, found itself separat-

ed from its forward base at Tobruk by 370 harsh miles and the rout began. There was nowhere to hide until it reached the Tunisian border. While the church bells pealed out in Britain, Rommel wrote poignantly to his

wife in Germany: "Rivers of blood poured out over miserable strips of land that not even the poorest Arab would have bothered about."

Desert wars, page 14
Leading article, page 15

Frantic maydays to City could not keep Dan-Air aloft

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE end came for Dan-Air after a long and lingering sickness. Despite frantic efforts to stave off its demise, David James, the chairman brought in to cure the ailing company, eventually had no alternative but to hand it over, with its debts, to British Airways.

For more than three months, a succession of airline specialists had shaken their heads over the company's financial health and decided that, as its losses had spiralled past £24 million in the first six months of this year, there was no point in trying to prolong the agony.

Finally, after more than a week of talks, BA agreed to take on the scheduled services and up to 600 staff. The charter operation will be closed and the remaining 1,500 staff will lose their jobs.

The root causes of Dan-Air's difficulties lay in the bones of the company itself. It had an old fleet of aircraft that cost far more to operate and maintain than those of its more modern rivals. It had no tour operator to guarantee a flow of passengers to its charter services and, operating from Gatwick rather than Heathrow, could not attract sufficient business customers.

The final blow came when rumours began circulating around the industry that it was in serious trouble and might not survive the winter. Vital contracts that should

have been signed by tour operators for next summer failed to materialise. Travel agents began warning potential customers that they should not book far ahead with Dan-Air. Cash-flow dried up and Mr James tried desperately, but unsuccessfully, to put together a deal with the City financial institutions.

Dan-Air was the oldest British airline still operating under its original name. It had been formed in 1953 by the London-based shipbroker Davies and Newman, whose initials gave it its name, operating out of Southend airport with flights to Manchester and Shannon. Its heyday came during the 1960s and 1970s with the rapid growth of package holidays.

But as tour operators expanded, they began increasingly to use their own airlines, with newer and more efficient aircraft, to fly charter passengers to the sun. By the late 1980s, Dan-Air's problems were becoming critical and it had no option but to call in outside help.

Within months, Mr James could claim a victory by selling the airline's engineering base for £27.5 million, trimming the size of the fleet and cutting loss-making routes. In November last year he claimed his final "triumph": a refinancing package worth £53.75 million which, it was claimed, would allow the airline to expand its profitable scheduled routes, update its fleet and make a profit this financial year.

It quickly became apparent that those were over-optimistic forecasts and soon the banks began to wonder if they would ever see a return on their investments. Once the rumours began, Dan-Air was as good as finished.

BA takeover, page 1
Shareholders lose, page 19

Maths stakes claim as a figure of fun

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

FOR those who remember mathematics lessons as more of a penance than a pleasure, the first conference in Britain on the history of recreational mathematics may seem a contradiction in terms. But David Singmaster, its organiser, expects at least 130 to attend today's seminars at South Bank University, London.

Recreational mathematics is booming, he says, and its history goes back to the dawn of numbers. Babylonian tablets containing rules for the solution of mathematical problems had puzzles interspersed to keep the young students amused.

Professor Singmaster defines recreational mathematics as any form of maths that is fun. He has found that one of the most familiar brain-teasers dates back to ALCUIN of York, a ninth century scholar who became an educational adviser to Charlemagne.

The teaser is about the man who has to cross a river with a wolf, a goat and a cabbage, in a boat which will take him and only one of the three at a time. How he does this without

leaving the goat with the cabbage, or the wolf with the goat, was child's play to ALUIN.

Nor are mathematical games simply fun, he says. They can lead to real advances in the subject. In the seventeenth century, the French philosopher Blaise Pascal began to study the mathematics of gambling, which led to probability theory and the emergence of insurance companies who based their business on it.

"Recreational mathematics has turned out over the millennia to be unreasonably useful," Professor Singmaster says. Today's speakers include a retired doctor, Robbie Bell, who has written the definitive *Board and Table Games from Many Civilisations* (in two volumes) and John Beasley, a computer consultant and the author of *The Ins and Outs of Peg Solitaire*. Dr Finkel will explain the rules of the Royal Game of Ur, while health physicist Angela Newing and Professor Singmaster will recall great recreational mathematicians of the past.



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Thatcher aide accuses Major of betraying UDM leader

By NICHOLAS WATT

JOHN Major and Michael Heseltine have reneged on undertakings given by senior Tory ministers in 1985 to the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, a former adviser to Baroness Thatcher said yesterday.

David Hart, who advised Lady Thatcher and the Coal Board during the miners' strike, said that if she had still been prime minister the government would not have betrayed the union. The ministers gave verbal assurances to the UDM that no Conservative government would let them down after Roy Lynk, its leader, said that he was nervous about setting up the union without pledges from the government. Mr Hart said: "He wanted an assurance that if he took any of the risks in setting up the union... ministers were not going to let him down and be inconsistent with the spirit of co-operation he was interested in engendering."

It is understood that the UDM was told by a cabinet minister that the government would not make any sudden announcements on sweeping changes in the coal industry without consulting the union and arranging for fair redundancy payments. Ministers felt that Mr Lynk had helped to rescue the government during the miners' strike and that it was in his debt. Business supporters of Lady Thatcher, who had nothing to do with the mining industry, were so impressed by Mr Lynk that they provided generous and vital money to set up the UDM.

Mr Hart said that Lady Thatcher kept to her word in 1990 when Lord Haslam, then chairman of British Coal, asked for permission to close substantial numbers of pits. She refused and Lord Haslam condemned "highly speculative Draconian" forecasts of 15,000 to 40,000 redundancies when he announced in 1990 that the workforce would be reduced by 6,000 over the next three years on top of 1,300 cuts already announced.

In an article in this week's *Spectator*, Mr Hart says that nobody should be surprised by Mr Lynk's intention to return his OBE. Mr Hart writes: "He [Mr Lynk] must be wondering why Mr Major's undertakings to Kohl and Mitterrand over Maastricht are more worthy of honour than undertakings given by Mrs Thatcher's government to British miners."

But Mr Lynk may at least have sweet revenge. "The only consolation for those Nottinghamshire miners now is that Mr Heseltine's future may be as insecure as their own," Mr Hart says. □ John Smith, the Labour leader, said yesterday that the Major government's handling of the pit closures demonstrated the "arrogance of power" and the need for new political structures to bring government closer to the people (Sheila Gunn writes).

In a lecture at Strathclyde University, he accused the prime minister of continuing the pattern set by his predecessor Margaret Thatcher of clawing power back to the centre.

The power of the born-again backbenchers

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WHO stopped the government's pit closure programme? Not Arthur Scargill. Not Roy Lynk. Not the Archbishop of York. Not even John Smith. It was Sir Marcus Fox, the chairman of the 1922 committee of Tory backbenchers, who brought the government to a juddering halt a week ago. In just three words, the MP for Shipley in West Yorkshire forced John Major into his handbrake turn.

"It is unacceptable," Sir Marcus said on BBC Radio 4's news programme *The World at One*, stopping not just the closure programme but a score of ministerial hearts in the process. With a government majority of only 21, backbench power had come of age.

It would be wrong to think of Sir Marcus as a rebel. His job, as the elected shop steward of the Tory benches, is to relay to the government the views of its troops. If he thinks that particular policies or ministers have had their day, his job is to tell the chief whip and, through him, Mr Major. Of course, he does not have to tell half the country as well and there are some MPs who wish that the publicity-conscious Sir Marcus could adopt a lower profile.

Sir Marcus was not just speaking for himself when he demanded a review of the closure programme. He had taken soundings among most of the 17 senior MPs who make up the executive of the 1922 committee.



SIR MARCUS FOX

Sir Marcus, MP for Shipley, was once described as a natural leader of the back-street Tories. A self-made businessman from Yorkshire never afraid to speak his mind, he is pro-hanging, anti-abortion, anti-EC. In post-election coup he ousted ex-spy Cranley Onslow as chairman of 1922 committee.

1922 and had been in touch with dozens of other worried rank-and-file Conservative MPs. He knew that when he went on air, he had his divisions in place.

As ever at Westminster, the answer lies in the arithmetic. For most of her reign, Margaret Thatcher enjoyed three-figure majorities and could afford to ride roughshod over the views of her backbenchers. Although she faced many an



SIR RHODES BOYSON

The side-whiskered Sir Rhodes switched from Labour councillor to right-wing MP for the unlikely Tory seat of Brent North. A doctor of philosophy and ex-headmaster, he claims to know what the average Tory voter thinks. Opposed poll tax. Now equally opposed to council tax.

angry rebellion, in which dissident MPs spoke forcefully against her, she could almost always be certain of victory.

John Major and his cabinet colleagues are slowly becoming aware that they are living in a different world. His 21-seat majority means that every vote is precious and that all but the most maverick of backbench Tories will have to be handled with kid gloves.



WINSTON CHURCHILL

Hard-right crusader against communism and grandson of Sir Winston, he occasionally displays a caring side. Has devoted career almost entirely to defence since entering Commons in 1970. By his own account, the dashing blond MP for Davyhulme has led an adventure-packed private life.

For the MPs, the narrow majority is a liberation. They have ceased to be mere lobby fodder and they can use their new-found power to shape the course of government policy. The resurrection is particularly sweet for the many older MPs on the Tory benches, who have either had their taste of ministerial office and been reduced to the ranks or who have seen their youthful ambitions frustrated. Sir

Rhodes Boyson, the plain-speaking Lancastrian who was a former minister, has hardly been off the nation's screens in the past week. It was also striking that many other senior backbenchers, including Winston Churchill, Sir John Hain, Sir Tony Durant, Sir Teddy Taylor, Sir George Galloway and Richard Shepherd, were much to the fore in forcing the government to climb down.

Many of these are also members of the 1922 executive, which has become a far more assertive and independent body under Sir Marcus's leadership. It should not be forgotten that the executive played a key role in passing David Mellor the black spot. Ministers defy it at their peril.

Mr Major has apparently already recognised this political reality. One of the first hints of the changed economic policy came at his Carlton Club lunch with committee members earlier this week. He has suggested that they meet far more frequently than in the past.

He would do well to keep his eye on them. The executive has a built-in right-wing majority and many of its members have distinctly Thatcherite sympathies. On the economy and Europe, as the protest about the return of the Maastricht bill demonstrated.

At the moment, they are prepared to set aside their doubts and back their prime minister. But if he ever stumbles badly, he should beware a visit from the "knights of the long knives".

Labour on separate route to recovery

By PETER RIDDELL
POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Labour leadership is trying to separate its national recovery programme from the government's new growth strategy foreshadowed this week by John Major.

Gordon Brown, Labour's shadow chancellor, is planning to put forward a detailed alternative approach ahead of the Autumn Statement on November 12. In advance, he yesterday argued that government promises of a growth strategy, including a relaxation of restrictions on private investment in public infrastructure projects, did not go far enough.

Mr Brown denies that there is a new consensus on a recovery plan for Britain. In a lengthy statement yesterday, he argued that a national recovery programme required emergency employment measures not just to cut unemployment but to help to reduce the fear of unemployment. This would therefore contribute to the return of consumer confidence.

The difference between the government and Labour is that we believe that there is a long-term problem in a declining industrial base that threatens even deeper balance of payments problems and must be addressed by policies which encourage exports and import substitution. The government should now bring together all sections of industry to agree an industry policy which should be accompanied by a proper energy policy for Britain.

Mr Brown drew a parallel with President Roosevelt's New Deal programme in the 1930s, but he did not spell out the cost of Labour's proposals. However, his warning against the damage caused by public spending cuts implies that Labour would be prepared to breach the £244.5 billion limit for next year which the Major government is seeking to achieve. This would be increased to finance higher spending on unemployment benefits and the short-term costs of the programme.

Bishop attacks policy of 'profit before people'

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE Bishop of Durham accused the government yesterday of sacrificing coal communities for the sake of quick profit as output ended at the Taff Merthyr colliery in South Wales.

Dr David Jenkins was speaking at a rally outside Easington colliery in co. Durham, one of the 24 mines reprieved from closure pending the review of the coal industry. As he spoke, two miles away at Vane Tempest, miners were completing the last coal-cutting shift at the pit. With Parkside in Lancashire and Taff Merthyr, it will go on a care and maintenance basis from today until the

90-day consultation period for the ten pits earmarked for instant closure expires. Miners will be expected to report for their shifts as usual but only a limited number will go down to carry out essential safety work. At Taff Merthyr, the 400 miners were told they could accept immediate redundancy payments or continue to report for work each day while the government reviews the closure programme.

Dr Jenkins drew cheers from a crowd of more than 500 miners and their families who had marched through Easington to the village's colliery, when he said that the country had at last woken up to the knowledge that short-term gain took no account of

the long-term effect of the closures. "Give our communities a chance to contribute to the future of this country," he said. "It is we and the future that are the bottom line, not the immediate cash returns."

The country had been "proceeding on a false prospectus, taking a simple short-term cash bottom line and not the bottom line of the people, the country and its resources." The bishop, accompanied by the Right Rev Owen Swindell, Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Hexham, held a short service at the pit entrance.

On the steps of Leeds Town Hall, Arthur Scargill, NUM president, challenged Michael Heseltine to a public

debate on pit closures and praised the stand taken by church leaders and some Conservative MPs. "It is an indication of the depth of feeling, an indication of the outrage that they feel something is fundamentally wrong. If people can change whole societies, if people can bring down the Berlin Wall, then I am convinced that people power can change Britain."

Issuing his challenge to the president of the board of trade, Mr Scargill said: "He can have half of the audience and I will have the other. I am so confident I am prepared to put this issue to a ballot of the British people."

Photograph, page 18

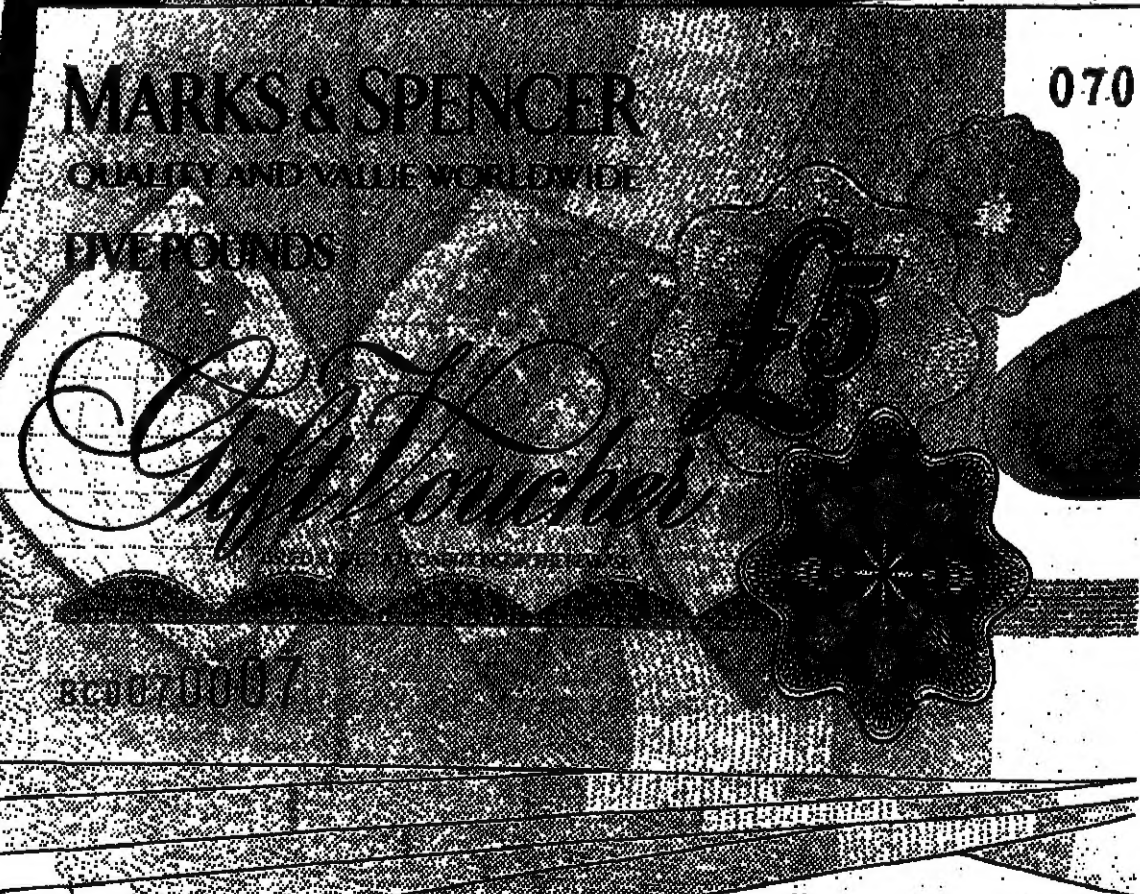
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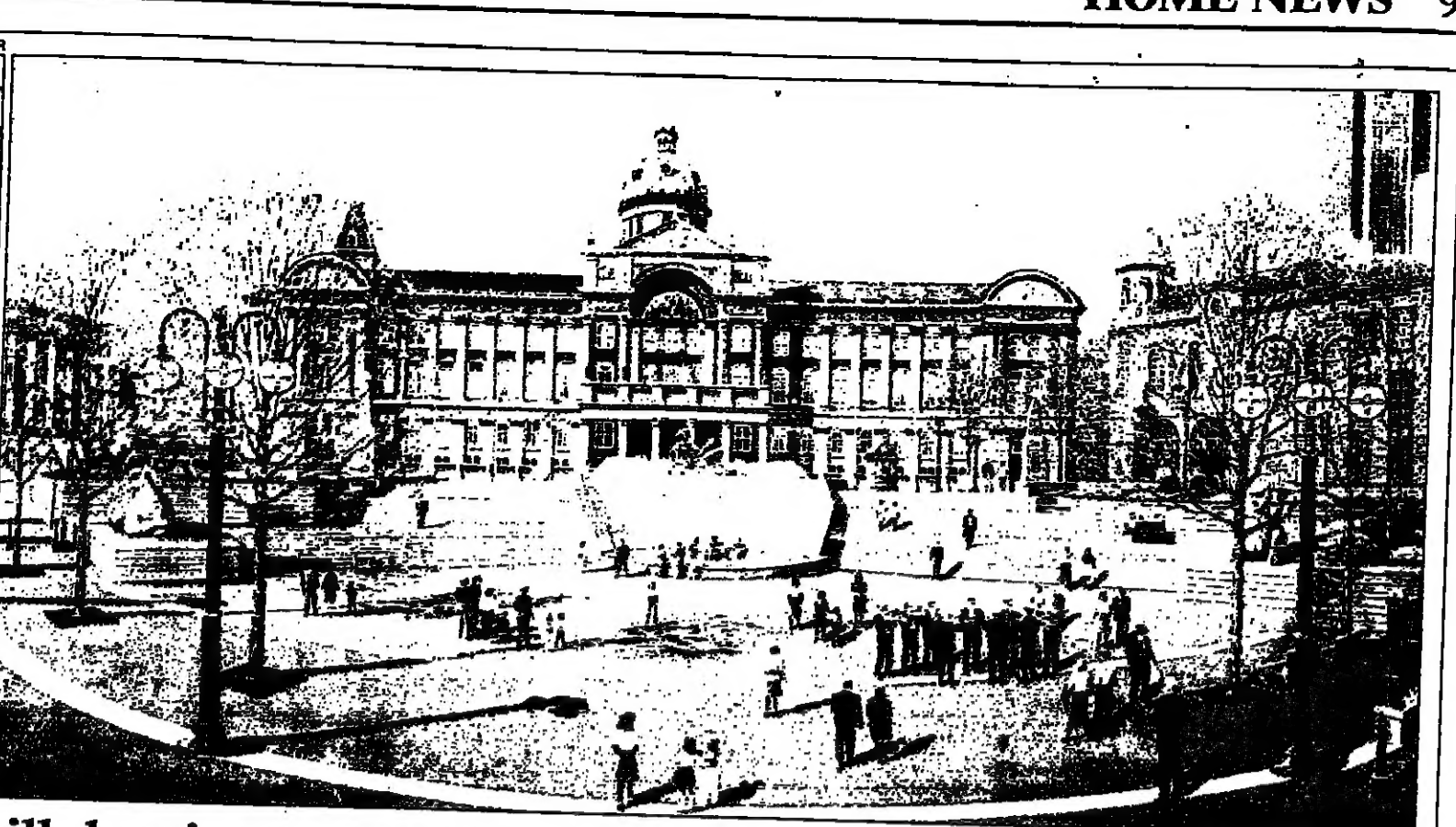
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Pride of place: finishing touches are being given to a sculpture, above left, which will be the centrepiece of a fountain to be placed in Victoria Square, Birmingham (Sarah Jane Checkland writes). The work, by the artist and sculptor Dhruva Mistry RA, will form a key part of the first important civic fountain to be completed in England

Carved enigma will dominate Britain's biggest fountain

since Trafalgar Square in the 1800s, and the largest fountain in Britain. A projection of the scheme is shown above. Mr Mistry says the female figure represents "the personification of

source, river". He hopes it will present an image of "certain enigma, of certain pride and dignity" which will enhance people's lives. The figure, more than 11ft long, will be immersed in a large

pool, flanked by two winged "guardian figures". Water will spout from an orb the figure is holding. The project is part of a pedestrianisation programme to include New Street and the already

completed Centenary Square in Birmingham. The fountain's site is at the junction of five streets converging in front of the Council House and City Hall. Les Sparks, Birmingham's director

of planning and architecture, said: "It will add greatly to the calm and tranquillity we hope to see in Victoria Square." Mr Mistry, who was born in India, has been artist in residence at Cambridge and the Victoria & Albert museum. Last year, at 34, he became the youngest man since Turner to be elected a Royal Academy member.

Bar attacks 'curse of secrecy' over choosing judges

By FRANCIS GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE secretive system for selecting judges was attacked by the Bar chairman yesterday for its "bizarre and farcical" procedures.

Lord Williams of Mostyn QC told solicitors at the Law Society conference in Birmingham that the system was damaged and flawed by "pointless secrecy — the curse of this country — and defensiveness". He praised the high standards, integrity and incorruptibility of judges, but said that selection procedures were so farcical that there was no need to exaggerate them.

Those applying to become assistant recorders, the first rung of the judicial ladder, had a secret file opened about them. They did not know what was in it and had no right of redress if it contained errors. Such a system should not be tolerated, he said.

He had suggested to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, that anyone concerned about the content of his or her file should be able to ask that it be independently reviewed by the present Bar chairman. "The amazing answer was no."

He highlighted what he called archaic and arcane defects. "Should your panting ambition be the circuit bench, you can write in and apply. If your sweating ambition is the High Court bench, you cannot. No one will be able to explain why this is."

Two lists, A and B, were kept for those deemed suitable for the High Court and those suitable for the circuit bench. Lord Williams said that, the last time he had seen the lists, he had remarked: "This chap won't do. He's quite unsuitable." On being asked why, he had replied: "I believe he's been dead for four years."

He said that he had received many letters supporting his

■ The system of judicial selection is said to owe more to Franz Kafka than to the efficient running of courts

recent call for a system of monitoring judicial performance and to take judges to task if they were "slow, incompetent, rude and arrogant". He predicted yesterday that in five years' time there would be such a system.

He also criticised the training of judges as "lamentably scanty". The Judicial Studies Board was under-resourced and undermanned. A week-long seminar for circuit judges once every five years was "quite simply not good enough". High Court judges had no further training.

He said that no full-time judge should be appointed without a period of training immediately beforehand, which should include the management of resources. He said that listing procedures in courts were a waste of legal aid funds, because they were based on the idea that no judge must be kept waiting. But a judge's salary was the cheapest daily component in the court.

Lord Mackay is expected to ask the Treasury to fund more High Court judges after attacks by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gossforth, over the shortage of manpower.

On Thursday night in the House of Lords, Lord Taylor accused Lord Mackay of failing to deal with the shortfall. He said: "Unless we have some more High Court judges appointed soon, even if it is not as many as we need, the become a national disgrace and will be seen as such by the public."

Early swans presage a short, savage winter

By ROBIN YOUNG

ALL the signs are for a short, hard winter. Swallows migrated early, owls are hunting by day and winter jasmine, prompted by an unusually cold spell, has already broken into bloom.

At the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust's reserve in Cambridgeshire, whooper swans have been pouring in months early, fleeing the Arctic on the strong northerly winds that sweep Britain this month.

Linda Butler, a warden at Welney, said yesterday: "Last year we had 14 whoopers at our mid-October count. This year there were 235, and many of the known birds were ones we would not expect to see until late November or early December."

In Thirsk, North Yorkshire, Bill Foggitt, the 79-year-old amateur weatherman, who is author of the newly published book *Weatherwise*, says: "I have noticed that when there is going to be a hard winter, the heron arrives early to fish in our local beck. This year the heron arrived by mid-September, earlier than I remember before." Another omen that

Mr Foggitt believes may presage a singularly harsh winter is the fact that barely any leaves remain on the trees in his garden. "Country lore says that when the leaves fall early it is the sign of a hard winter to come. Usually there are still lots of yellow leaves clinging to our trees at Christmas, but this year I am watching the last ones fall already."

In Hampshire, Ken Young, a keen horticulturalist and weather observer, says that onions have grown extra layers of external skin this year, presumably to protect themselves from the cold to come.

Professional meteorologists are unimpressed by the behaviour of birds and onions but believe that volcanic eruptions in the Philippines, Chile and Japan in the past year have thrown up dustclouds that could absorb up to 4 per cent of the Sun's heat over the next few years. "It is colder than average for the time of year. The cold spell has started early," the British Meteorological Office said.

Forecast, page 18



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Turkey bears down on Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq

■ The Ankara government has swatted the mosquitoes of Kurdish nationalism for years. Now, it claims, it is time to drain the swamp

By Andrew Finkel and Our Foreign Staff

TURKISH troops operating on several fronts have launched a drive across the mountainous border of northern Iraq in an attempt to drive out guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Turkey has been involved in a protracted struggle with rebel Turkish Kurds fighting a separatist battle from mountain bases in what is now a liberated Iraqi Kurdistan. Suleyman Demirel, the prime minister, yesterday said that Turkey had no intention to annex territory or establish a security zone. Nevertheless, the presence of 5,000 troops in what is still Iraqi territory underlines his government's determination to have a say in the future of the region.

Turkey has tried for many years to undermine Kurdish nationalism. Even with the end of military rule a decree was passed which made it illegal to "speak a language other than the primary language of a country recognised by Turkey". This ban was lifted in 1991.

Whereas the west of Turkey began to enjoy the steady climb to a democratic pluralism and a more liberal economy during the 1980s, the southeast remained under a form of emergency rule. This

was formalised in 1987 with the creation of a regional governorate. The "super-governor", as he became known, enjoyed extraordinary powers, including for a time, the right to control the flow of news from the area.

In 1988, after Saddam Hussein's chemical bombing of Halabja in northern Iraq, Turkey accepted a tide of refugees. The presence of a new Kurdish community in major cities such as Diyarbakir strengthened Turkish Kurds' own sense of identity. A second, much larger wave of refugees arrived in Turkey after the uprising which followed the Gulf war.

Turkey has been grappling with the PKK since 1984 in a struggle that has cost 5,100 lives. More than a third of those casualties have occurred in the last year. Mr Demirel told a press conference in Ankara yesterday that there was no point "swatting the mosquitoes" and that Turkey now had to "drain the swamp".

Turkey is already convinced that the Iraqi Kurds have managed to set up their own independent state under the protection of warplanes of the Western alliance based in Turkey. In practice, Iraqi

Kurds clinging on to a safe haven in the face of a total embargo on food and fuel imposed by Baghdad, are totally dependent on Turkish goodwill.

For the last three weeks, the Iraqi Kurds have mounted their own campaign to expel the PKK from their remote mountain bases. The Turkish army, using jet fighters and now troops, appear determined to succeed. In recent days, the Turkish authorities have claimed significant military successes against PKK units based in northern Iraq.

Turkish radio said that security forces crossed the border early Thursday morning into the PKK-held area of Halabtin, in the mountains north-east of the Iraqi border town of Zakho. In another thrust further east, troops moved five miles in the Kakur Valley near where the borders of Iraq, Turkey and Iran converge. Forces are also reported to have crossed near the mountain village of Isikveren where in April 1991, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi



Young bloods: children in Cizre, Turkey, flaunt a photograph of Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdistan Workers' Party leader

Kurds crossed into Turkey after their rebellion against Baghdad had been suppressed.

Throughout the week, rumours have been circulating in Ankara that Tehran had agreed to prevent any escape

of an estimated 3,000 PKK fighters across the border into Iran, which has been suspected at times of supporting the PKK against Iraq, their mutual enemy. Reports from Lebanon also indicate that the Lebanese army has declared

its determination to prevent the PKK from returning to their training camps.

In the past, PKK militants based in the Bekaa Valley — and supported by Syria — could cross through Syria into Iraq and then into Turkey.

The Syrians presumed motive was their fear of the vast Turkish irrigation and hydro-electric scheme to control the headwaters of the Tigris and the Euphrates. "If we find even one PKK guerrilla here we will detain him," Colonel

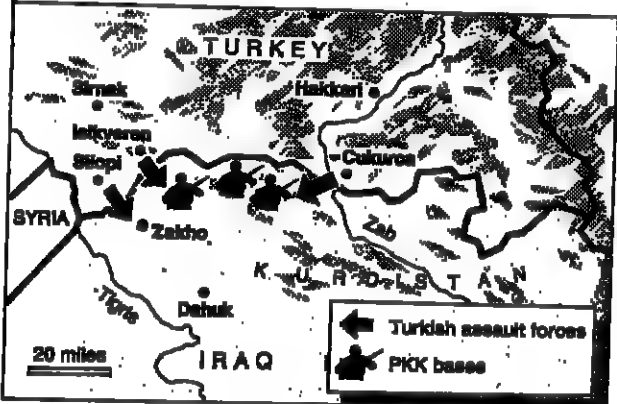
Tirad Farhat of the Lebanese army in the Bekaa said.

Turkish successes in isolating the PKK from their support abroad will go some way towards easing anxiety about instability in the region that has continued since the Gulf war. The Turkish prime minister described the operation as "open-ended".

Several domestic commentators have chided the Demirel government for its passivity towards Iraq, even to the extent of quietly hoping that Saddam will weather the storm. Many of the members of the 42 parties which make up the opposition Iraqi National Congress, travel to northern Iraq through Turkey which also hosts missions from the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, to work out a strategy to overthrow Saddam. If the government assault on the PKK is successful, the speculation must be that Turkey will have less reason to insist on its present policy of defending the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Muhyi al-Khatib, a former head of Iraq's diplomatic mission in Washington, described the current opposition gathering — the first ever on what is still Iraqi soil — as a significant blow to Saddam's credibility.

Leading article, page 15



Villagers await death in cradle of civilisation

By Andrew Finkel

The shattered windows of his own party's headquarters in the town of Sirnak are clearly not what Suleyman Demirel, the Turkish prime minister, intended when he pledged on the eve of his election a year ago to make the very walls of government transparent. The building next door has fared even worse. An artillery shell has removed a sizeable chunk of the breeze-block exterior and the front-room curtains are still neatly draped in the wires of a telephone pole ten yards across the street.



Demirel: gave pledge on ethnic rights

For some time, the people of Sirnak have been too scared to wander out after dusk into the crossfire between the security forces and militants of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). "No one can say for certain who fired all the bullets," said one man, whose zinc roof was turned into a sieve. He is not alone in his conviction, however, that on the night of August 18 the army and police used a PKK guerrilla attack to avenge past incidents and demonstrate who, in a display of force, could be the more intimidating.

Sirnak is a provincial capital in Turkey's largely Kurdish southeast. In Istanbul, at any one of the conferences staged at the city's new five-star hotels, another message is simultaneously translated into the ears of visiting notables from the Balkans or the Caucasus, the Black Sea rim and the new republics of Central Asia. Turkey — democratic, secular and committed to the free-market economy — has become a stable vessel. In Sirnak, and in points throughout the country's southeast, the boat has sprung a leak.

Mr Demirel announced early on in his term of office recognition of what he called "Kurdish reality". To an outside world, acknowledgement of the ethnic identity of perhaps a fifth of the country's 60 million population seems an act of common sense. Yet for all the government's good intentions, violence has, if anything, increased.

"We are sitting here, waiting for death," said one of the few shopkeepers in Sirnak to keep his shutters open. For the third week running, the people in Sirnak who have not fled wake to the sound of Turkish jets flying across the nearby border with northern Iraq. This is the ancient Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilisation. Rugged scenery which elsewhere would be the setting for an alpine resort

has become a hunting ground as helicopter-borne troops comb the mountains.

The Turkish military is trying to hem in the PKK, with Iraqi Kurdish *peshterge* armies pushing from the other side. "Our patience is at an end," said Saffet Dincay, the Ankara representative of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party. For more than a year, the PKK has ignored an ultimatum to leave the area.

Isolating the PKK from bases abroad is a conventional task in comparison to the messy business of enforcing security at home. What happened in Sirnak and then in the smaller town of Kulp is evidence that they are prepared to see not just villages but even towns depopulated rather than allow the PKK a foothold. The problem goes deeper than that.

Must Anter, 74, a Kurdish newspaperman and scholar, last month visited Diyarbakir, a city at the heart of the Kurdish southeast. A man driving him to meet prospective tenants for a piece of land he owned instead took out a gun and shot him in the head and heart. Senior ministers deny the existence of state death squads, but local people link the killing to a long chain of unsolved political assassinations.

"I cannot help but believe that Anter has been killed by the notorious state force, called the counter-guerrilla or 'special warfare department'," wrote Oktay Eksi, a leading columnist.

By no means all the violence has been committed by security forces. This month, the PKK rounded up villagers sympathetic to the government at Cevizdagli for a political lecture and then opened fire to kill nearly 40 when troops arrived.

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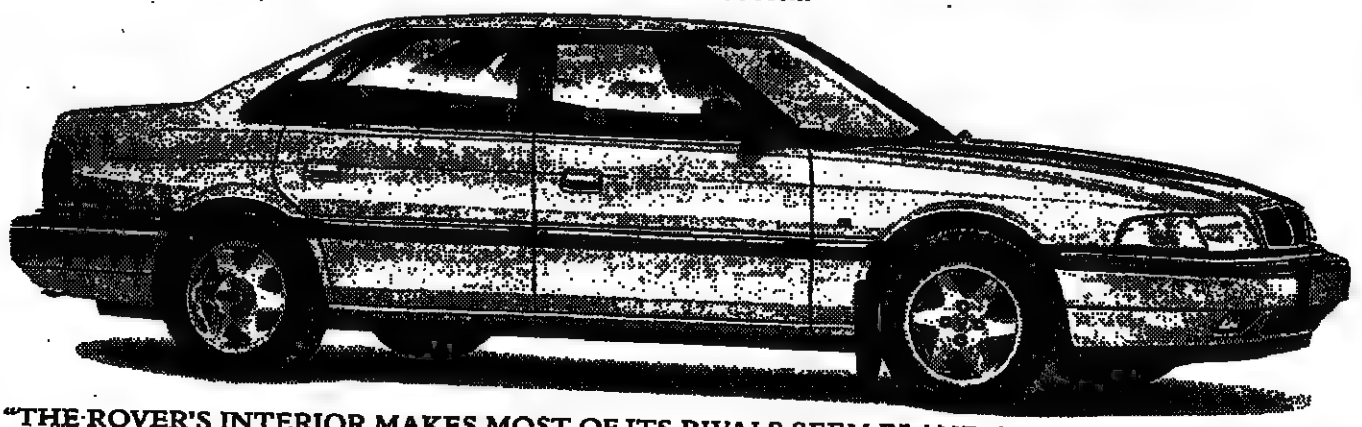
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Baseball team could strike out Canadian unity for good



Trudeau says accord is a complete mess

■ A constitutional crisis looks imminent. Talks to resolve the Quebec issue have yielded an accord likely to be rejected by voters

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN MONTREAL

CANADA is on the brink of what might be termed a most civil war, as a country celebrated for its restraint and courtesy approaches what politicians here describe as potentially the most damaging constitutional crisis in its history.

On Monday Canadians will vote on whether to approve the Charlottetown Accord, a package of constitutional reforms aimed at settling once and for all the place of French-speaking Quebec in the Canadian confederation. The vote comes after weeks of bitter argument between French and English-speaking Canadians and if, as expected, the accord is rejected, many believe the break-up of the country itself will not be far behind.

The agreement was hammered out over two years and concluded in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, last August with the initial support of Canada's entire political establishment—a remarkable achievement in this relentlessly polite but bitterly divided nation. By the terms of the agreement, Francophone Quebec would be recognised as a "distinct society" and granted a quarter of the seats in the House of Commons in perpetuity. The Senate would be reformed, as demanded by the western provinces, and the

inherent right to self-government of Canada's native people—the Indians and Inuit—would be enshrined in the constitution.

But the latest polls indicate that the accord is now destined for almost certain defeat, for while it promises something for everyone it also contains something for everyone to object to. A majority in the western provinces of Alberta and British Columbia believe it makes too many concessions to Quebec, and will probably vote "No", but many nationalists in Quebec would want more, and the province will almost certainly vote "No".

When the list of naysayers

also includes feminists and the disabled, who claim to have been excluded, ethnic groups demanding full sovereignty, and Pierre Trudeau, the charismatic former prime minister, who describes the accord as "a complete mess", the recipe for acrimonious failure is all but complete. Only one province needs to reject the accord for the measure to fail, and the most comprehensive survey shows that 46 per cent of all Canadians now oppose the reforms, while only 33 per cent support them.

Brian Mulroney, the prime minister, whose deep unpopularity has fuelled opposition to the accord, has been touring the country as a prophet of doom, predicting damnation and disaster if the measure fails to gain public approval. "A 'No' vote means the end of Canada," he says bleakly.

That view is supported by many Canadian businesses

that predict that a "No" vote could cripple an economy already riddled by the recession. The Canadian dollar has plunged on world markets since campaigning began, and the Banque Royale recently conducted a study that concluded that, while a "Yes" vote would stimulate the economy, rejection and the possible fragmentation of Canada would lead to a slump and the emigration of a million of the "best and brightest Canadians".

The credibility of Robert Bourassa, Quebec's premier, has been badly damaged by leaks indicating that even his own staff believe he "caved in" at Charlottetown and abandoned French interests. Waiting in the wings is Jacques Parizeau, leader of the Parti Québécois, a master of partisan politics and chief exponent of the "No" lobby.

If the referendum is rejected, say many Canadian observers, the country will gradually, non-violently but completely fall to pieces. A drive for an independent Quebec would probably prompt British Columbia and Alberta, the prosperous provinces in the west, to follow suit, possibly taking in Saskatchewan and Manitoba in a loose federation. That would leave the industrial heartland of Ontario, and the poorer Atlantic provinces to survive on their own.

The fate of the North American Free Trade Agreement in such circumstances is unclear. There are already suggestions that an independent Quebec would look towards Europe, while the west coast provinces are already firmly in the economic and cultural orbit of the Pacific rim.

Even in America, where Canadian politics have been traditionally looked on with a

combination of patronising amusement and bafflement, the constitutional rumpus north of the border has attracted close attention. America has enough of its own cultural, ethnic and linguistic divisions to regard a precedent-setting schism in Canada with genuine alarm.

Strange as it may seem, the best hope for the "Yes" vote may now lie in the hands of a baseball team, the Toronto Blue Jays, who are currently leading 3-2 in the baseball World Series against the Atlanta Braves, the first time a Canadian team has reached the final and a source of deep and new-found patriotism among many Canadians.

If the Blue Jays emerge victorious on Sunday night, it may unite the country if, only temporarily. But if they lose, Canada's latest bid and possibly last chance to achieve national unity may be lost too.

US braced to impose sanctions on EC imports

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

PRESIDENT Bush was yesterday briefed by officials on the breakdown of the world trade talks, and sources said the American administration was moving towards the imposition of punitive sanctions on up to \$1 billion (\$617 million) of European Community exports. That could trigger a transatlantic trade war.

Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, Lawrence Eagleburger, the acting Secretary of State, and Carla Hills, the US trade representative, attended an urgent White House meeting on the crisis on Thursday night. No decision was reached, but officials confirmed that the "centre of gravity" was shifting towards sanctions.

Although hopes were expressed in the world's economic capitals yesterday that a new global trade deal could still be salvaged, there was evidence that France's loud opposition to an agreement was being quietly backed by Germany. John Major yesterday spoke to Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor by telephone about what both men apparently hope will only be an interruption in the talks over a new treaty under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). According to Downing Street, both leaders agreed that the European Commission should restart talks.

Michael Heseltine, the president of the board of trade, told BBC radio that Jacques Delors, the French president of the European Commission, should put aside national loyalties and act on behalf of all Europeans to save the talks. "The difficulty is," Mr Heseltine said, "that the president of the Commission is of course very close to the French interests in this matter and he has therefore conflicting loyalties." Mr Delors regularly denies giving any preference to French interests. But he has given no indication that he believes an acceptable deal is in sight.

If Mr Bush does order sanctions, they could be implemented in stages to give the EC a last chance to abandon what the Americans claim are

unacceptable new positions on oilseed and other farm subsidies. Despite EC denials, administration officials were adamant yesterday that the GATT talks had been suspended. But they said that Edward Madigan, the US agriculture secretary, was ready to meet Ray McSharry, the EC's agriculture commissioner, at short notice "if there's reason to believe the EC will show some renewed flexibility".

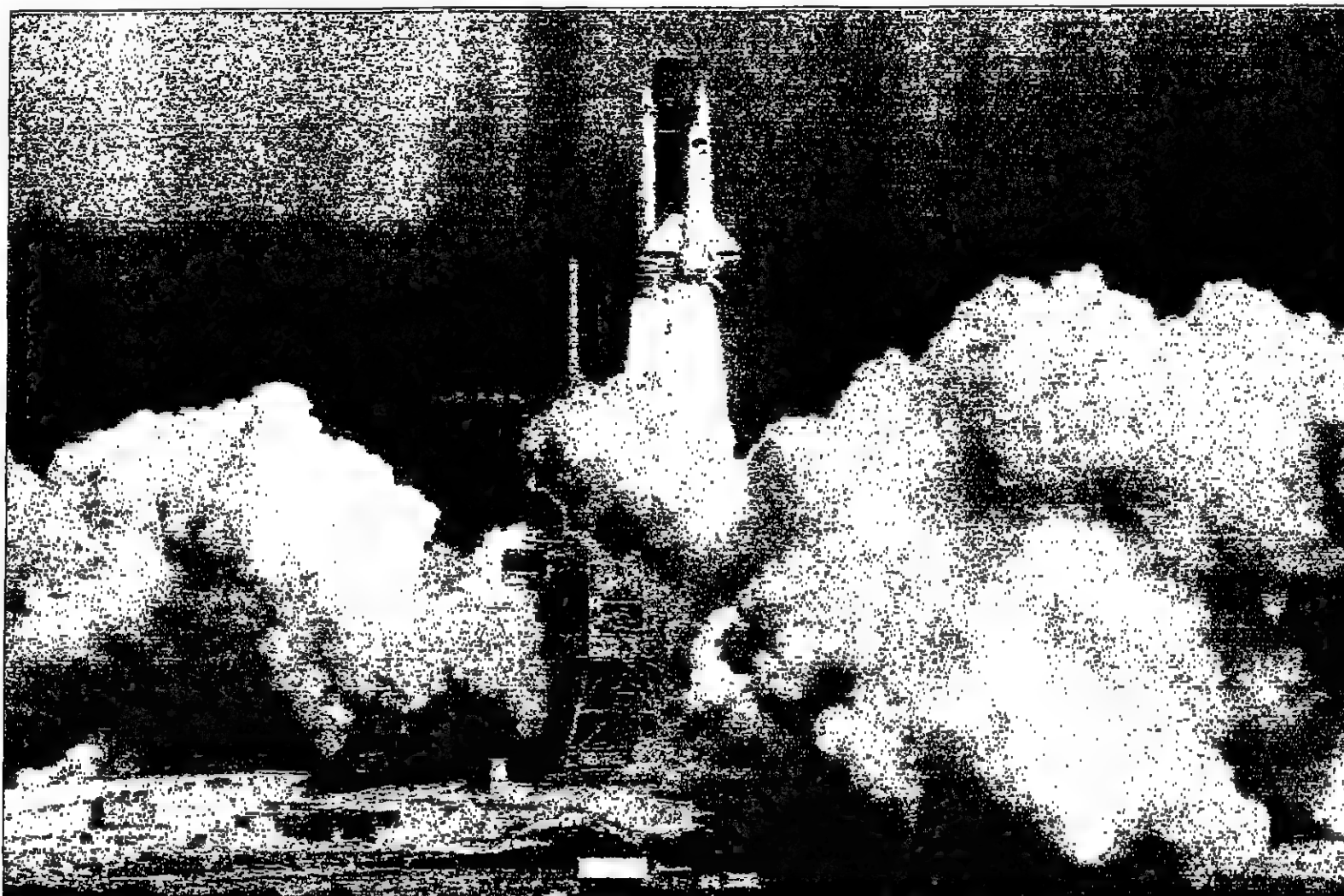
One European official in Washington warned that time was now "very short" and the Americans were "not bluffing". With the presidential election just 11 days away, Mr Bush had to be seen taking a tough line with the EC.

An official at the US agriculture department confirmed that the imposition of sanctions was "under active consideration". A White House official said: "We feel we have gone as far as we can go. We have got to look at our options." If implemented, the sanctions of perhaps 100 per cent would hit up to \$100 million worth of British exports, primarily cheese, confectionery and spirits, according to a list published by Ms Hills, in the summer.

European Commission officials insisted that transatlantic contacts were still under way and that a deal could be concluded in days; their American counterparts repeated their wariness of resuming talks until the EC softened its position. French ministers continued to assert that no breakthrough was possible before the American presidential election on November 3.

Other trading powers criticised France as the sole Community state responsible for the impasse. John Kerin, the Australian trade minister, said: "We ought to mount massive pressure on the French because this [a trade war] is going to hurt the French in the long haul."

But sources close to the talks say that France's campaign against EC concessions is based on the secure confidence that Bonn will back its resistance. The German government is itself divided over how a GATT deal should be done.



Fired with success: the Columbia shuttle blasting into orbit from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The six-member crew, including a Canadian, launched a £2.5 million Italian-made laser-reflecting satellite yesterday, completing the main task of their ten-day mission

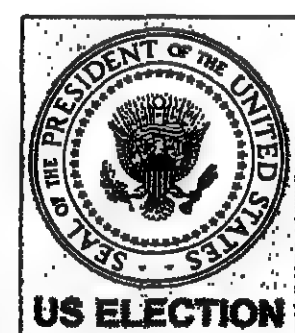
Vietnam to yield dossier on fate of missing Americans

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

PRESIDENT Bush, seizing on some rare good news, yesterday announced that Hanoi had agreed to turn over its entire archives on Americans still missing from the Vietnam war and claimed credit for a "real breakthrough" on an issue that has caused his country so much anguish.

"Today, finally, I am convinced that we can begin writing the last chapter of the Vietnam war," Mr Bush said after an early-morning White House briefing from a US mission just back from Vietnam. "Hanoi's records will at last enable us to determine the fate of many of our men. Today is a day of significance for all Americans," he said in a Rose Garden ceremony attended by relatives of the 2,265 American servicemen still unaccounted for nearly two decades after the American withdrawal.

The mission brought back nearly 5,000 photographs of dead or captured Americans, on the basis of which a few



US ELECTION

families have already been told that their relatives died in Vietnam. General Vesey, Mr Bush's personal envoy to Vietnam, said the photographs were only the start of the records and artefacts that Hanoi planned to hand over.

Mr Bush announced modest humanitarian assistance for Vietnamese flood victims, and said Washington would now consider further steps towards normalising relations with Vietnam, which is desperate to have the American trade embargo lifted. Hanoi, however, surrendered the photographs only after Washington found evidence of their existence last summer and Mr Bush pledged full normalisation would not occur until he was convinced there had been a "full accounting".

Eleven days before the election, new polls yesterday showed Mr Bush still trailing well behind Bill Clinton, with Ross Perot a threatening third. A Wall Street Journal-ABC News poll gave Mr Clinton 47 per cent, Mr Bush 28 and Mr Perot 19, with equivalent figures of 44, 32 and 17 in the CNN-USA Today daily tracking poll.

The Wall Street Journal had 76 per cent of Mr Clinton's supporters saying there was "no chance" of them changing their minds, compared to 65 per cent of Mr Bush's backers. With respondents divided into region, race, age, sex and class, Mr Clinton still led in every category. The CNN poll showed Mr Bush closing on Mr Clinton in the South, but being chased by Mr Perot in the West. Mr Bush hastily revised his weekend schedule to campaign in states such as Montana and South Dakota, where Mr Perot is strongest. The Bush camp insists the

race is tightening, but the president appears unable to rise above one third support. His best hope is that Mr Perot, who has lost much of his support, but so far the Texan billionaire seems to have gained at both his opponents' expense. Still insisting he can win, Mr Perot spent \$26 million (£16 million) on advertising in the first 14 days of this month, but he has not appeared in public over the past four days.

Mr Bush campaigned in Kentucky, Florida and Alabama yesterday, but had betrayed his jitters earlier by accusing Mr Perot of "nutty ideas" and "crazy statements" and warning against wasted votes. Mr Perot retorted that Mr Bush had lost touch with reality and had an "army of people going round trying to destroy his opponents".

The State Department was compelled yesterday to expand its investigation of why politically-appointed officials scoured the department's passport files for damaging information on Mr Clinton when it transpired they had also searched his mother's files. The searches far exceeded the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act requests by news organisations, and the appointees were said to have been disappointed at how little information they found.

Mr Clinton, who on Thursday night attracted 18,000 in California's Republican Orange County and yesterday campaigned in Nevada and Missouri, jokingly called his mother a "well-known subversive" and said the searching "would be funny if it's not so pathetic". Al Gore, Mr Clinton's running mate, demanded that Mr Bush apologise to the Clinton family.

Jack Kemp, the Housing Secretary, embarrassed Mr Bush with a fund-raising letter that appeared to be writing off this election and launching Mr Kemp's bid for the 1996 Republican nomination. It invited leading conservatives "to join me in this crusade to save our party".

In a policy reversal, the administration approved development of the V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft to be built in the key electoral states of Texas and Pennsylvania.

Friend throws light on Oxford days

BY NICHOLAS WATT

As Bill Clinton fends off his opposition to the Vietnam war makes him unfit for the presidency, one of his best friends at Oxford said that the young Rhodes Scholar had no time for left-wingers who had been against American imperialism. President Bush's portrayal of Mr Clinton at Oxford was an unpatriotic and irresponsible anti-war activist was inaccurate.

The friend, who wanted to remain anonymous and who now holds a sensitive position in Washington, said: "There was a lot of rhetoric from the left about American imperialism. But Bill didn't go along with that. He was against the war but he never accused America of being imperialistic. He opposed the war because he felt it was a terrible mistake. He believed that the asserted goal — to stop communism — would never be achieved. He also felt that it was not worth the carnage to America and Vietnam."

As a student, Mr Clinton was so absorbed at Oxford by the Vietnam war that he furiously studied 19th century British diplomatic history for parallels, his friend said. "It was his first real chance to study that area and he made full use of Oxford's facilities. He was interested in looking through a historical prism to see what happens when countries overstretch themselves."

One of Mr Clinton's favourite books at Oxford was Lord Blake's *Disraeli*. His friend said: "I remember his face buried into that book."

At Oxford Mr Clinton was such a voracious reader that he liked to talk into the small hours about his reading. His friend said: "Life with Bill Clinton was like a permanent open-ended seminar. He was a great talker and also a good listener. He has a very enquiring mind and great curiosity. Oxford for him was a liberating experience."

President Bush has also questioned Mr Clinton's trip to Moscow, while he was studying at Oxford, a year after the Soviet Union crushed the Prague Spring. But his friend said: "Bill's trips were intellectual tourism. As a Rhodes Scholar he was encouraged to travel and there were stipends to fund the trips."

A flattered Lord Blake said yesterday that Mr Clinton's interest in his book gave the potential president an unlikely bedfellow. "The other American presidential figure who was interested in my book was Richard Nixon. After he had retired in disgrace I had a long conversation with him about *Disraeli*. He was fascinated about how Disraeli had risen from the outside. Mr Nixon gave the impression that he was reading about himself in parts of the book," Lord Blake said.

Like Mr Nixon, Mr Clinton may see parallels with himself in the book. "Disraeli was an adventurer and Mr Clinton is an adventurer all right. If he thinks of himself as an outsider he may see something in Disraeli," Lord Blake said.

If Mr Clinton follows Disraeli's pattern of leadership Washington's elite had better watch out. Lord Blake said: "Disraeli never became an insider but rather a ruler of insiders." Close reading of *Disraeli* would have taught Mr Clinton the art of pragmatism, Lord Blake said. "He would have learnt the importance of being empirical and not being ideological."

Mr Clinton did not just limit himself to reading history books. "He read a lot of American novels, and particularly southern literature. I remember him reading Thomas Wolfe and Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*," his friend said.

At Oxford Mr Clinton was such a voracious reader that he liked to talk into the small hours about his reading. His friend said: "Life with Bill Clinton was like a permanent open-ended seminar. He was a great talker and also a good listener. He has a very enquiring mind and great curiosity. Oxford for him was a liberating experience."

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Memo by North ties Bush to deal on hostages

FROM JANIE DEYTMER IN WASHINGTON

A SECRET 1985 White House memorandum prepared in advance of a meeting in Washington between George Bush, then vice-president, and Terry Waite, the former special envoy to the Archbishop of Canterbury, suggests that Reagan administration officials wanted to enlist Mr Waite's help on a key aspect of the Iran-Contra deal.

It was not clear last night whether Mr Waite was aware of the administration's plans which might have compromised his position as an independent negotiator.

The document, which was drawn up by Colonel Oliver North, the National Security Council aide at the centre of the illegal arms-for-hostages arrangement with Tehran, talks of encouraging Mr Waite to persuade Kuwait to release 17 Iranian-backed terrorists held in the emirate. One passage in the lengthy memorandum says that American officials were eager for Mr Waite to explore ways of getting the Kuwaitis to accept "blood money" for the release of the terrorists, all members of the Tehran-supported Dawa Party.

As well as casting new light on the puzzling relationship between Mr Waite and Colonel North, the memorandum also provides evidence of the extent of President Bush's knowledge of the illegal Iran-Contra affair.

Recently, Mr Bush insisted that he was "out of the power loop" and had been excluded from White House meetings which dealt with the Iran-Contra affair. He has said he knew about the arms sales to Tehran but not that they involved a swap for American held hostages in Lebanon.

The memo, parts of which were published by *The New York Times* yesterday, show that National Security Council aides briefed Mr Bush on several complex aspects of their efforts to free American hostages. The document is likely to fuel Democrat claims that Mr Bush has tried to disguise his role in the Iran-Contra affair.

The document, which was prepared as an aide-memoire for Mr Bush for his meeting with Mr Waite on November 26, 1985, familiarises the then vice-president with the then releasing efforts of the Church of England envoy, and details White House plans to use Mr Waite to secure the release of Americans in the Middle East.

In it, Mr North lays out an agenda for the meeting and informs Mr Bush of Mr Waite's help in trying to persuade Kuwait to release the 17 Dawa party terrorists, which Tehran had made in to one of its central demands in the Iran-Contra deal.

Mr North's memorandum would also seem to cast doubt on Mr Waite's assurances a few weeks later to Dr Robert Runcie, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, that his only contact with the American government had been to arrange transport for himself to and from Beirut.

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Peking forecasts turmoil if Patten pushes reforms

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING AND JONATHAN BRAUDE IN HONG KONG

CHINA took off the velvet gloves yesterday and raised the spectre of confrontation, even turmoil, in Hong Kong if Chris Patten continued his efforts to expand democracy in the British colony.

Leaving Peking after his first official visit here as Hong Kong's governor yesterday, Mr Patten admitted that ten hours of talks with Chinese officials, including Lu Ping, in charge of policy on the colony, had been vigorous and said it was "hardly a state secret that we did not see eye to eye on everything. The differences have not widened this week. Nor, frankly, can I say they have narrowed."

The crux of the talks was Britain's desire to expand democracy among the six million people of the colony before its handover to China in 1997, a move that has outraged Peking's authoritarian leadership. On the Chinese side, diplomatic niceties

China, which has fomented unrest in Hong Kong before, is making thinly veiled threats that history will repeat itself if unilateral democratic change is implemented

were abandoned after the governor's departure yesterday. Mr Lu, director of Peking's Hong Kong and Macau office, said that if Mr Patten carried on with his plans for greater democracy, China would disband the territory's Legislative Council and elect a new one under its own rules after 1997.

Mr Patten was still airborne over China when the mailed fist, which it seems inevitably would have appeared at some time in the run-up to the British withdrawal from Hong Kong, was displayed, with Mr Lu electrifying a press conference by suddenly talking of confrontation. "The essence of our differences is

not whether the pace of democracy should be accelerated," announced Mr Lu, 65, a patrician figure speaking quietly before a lacquer screen depicting green bamboo stalks, and tapping a pencil to emphasise his points. "The essence is whether there should be co-operation or there should be confrontation. Of course, the Chinese side does not wish to seek confrontation... however, this does not depend only on the will of one side." Mr Lu said he hoped that both sides would proceed from the viewpoint of continued Sino-British friendship. "Now we have to see the British side has the sincerity to seek a smooth transfer."

However, mention of "turmoil" can only serve to increase anxieties in Hong Kong, where Mr Patten will report this morning to the Legislative Council on his talks.

Mr Lu also referred to the £13.5 billion airport to be built at Chek Lap Kok, about which there has been disagreement. He said he had told Mr Patten that, if the British side went ahead with the works without agreement with China, it would violate the memorandum of understanding on the project between the two sides. Mr Lu implied China would not agree that aircraft taking off from Chek Lap Kok could enter Chinese airspace.

At his press conference, Mr Patten had been just as adamant. "This airport will be built, not because it serves British interests in any way but because Hong Kong needs it". Mr Patten, whose gamble on expanding democracy in the colony has relied on his political guile in deftly expanding the franchise within the framework of the Basic Law, said that the bulk of the discussions had been on proposals for the colony's political development which, he said, most Hong Kong people supported.

Referring to 1995 legislative elections, he noted: "Detailed arrangements have to be put in place well before then." Having given, in effect, a deadline to the Chinese side, Mr Patten said he would welcome it if those who criticised his proposals came up with alternatives.

Last night, Mr Lu's comments provoked a storm of defiance in Hong Kong with the governor and his supporters standing firm behind his proposals. However, conservative businessmen and pro-Peking elements urged caution.

Martin Lee, the chairman of the Liberal United Democrats, said he would support Mr Patten against Chinese interference and called on the governor not to back down. "No one wants to confront Peking," but the Chinese must respect our right to make our own decisions. "Finally, Lau, an independent liberal, said she did not want the governor to have cold feet. She issued a warning that "if he changed his mind now he will be ruined for ever."

It remained to be seen whether, with the threat of possible confrontation looming, the Legislative Council and the Hong Kong business community would support Mr Patten's bold moves to expand democracy or whether, with the view to China's past ability to foment "turmoil" in the territory, they will begin to bend with the cold winds blowing from Peking.

Emperor expresses grief at China war

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

EMPEROR Akihito of Japan arrived in Peking yesterday on the first ever imperial visit to China and almost apologised for the atrocities that his father's troops committed here in the second world war.

At a banquet given by President Yang Shangkun, the emperor referred to the invasion and occupation which left an estimated ten million people dead. "In the long history of relations between our two countries," he said, "there was an unfortunate period when our country brought profound suffering to the Chinese people. I feel a deep sense of grief about this."

As an apology, it matched what the emperor has said to other Asian countries which suffered at the hands of Japanese troops. But it did not go as far as most Chinese would have liked.

The emperor is under considerable pressure. Japan's right wing refuses to contemplate an apology for the war, and the Japanese emperor must not be seen as a humiliated, frail human rather than a descendant of the gods. Chinese leaders, keen to host the visit, agreed in advance that they would not embarrass the emperor by pressing for an apology. President Yang, however, could not resist mentioning the war briefly, saying that Sino-Japanese relations went through an unfortunate period.

Some Chinese are furious that the emperor is being greeted like an old friend



Akihito: Chinese suffered profoundly

instead of an old enemy just because Peking wants to attract more investment from Japan. With emotions high, security has been tightened. Police have suppressed groups which were preparing to demand compensation from Japan for war losses. Residents with apartments overlooking the emperor's route were told to keep their windows shut.

The imperial programme consists mainly of sight-seeing in Peking, Xian and Shanghai. But the visit is intended to set the tone for increased trade, investment and technology exchange. The Chinese did not seem to have spruced up Peking for the emperor in the same way as they did for the Queen in 1986. A Japanese woman awaiting the imperial arrival at the airport fell down an uncovered manhole and litter blew around.

Squabbles hit Tokyo faction

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

THE ruling Liberal Democrats in Japan, mired in a multimillion-pound corruption scandal that forced the resignation of Shin Kanemaru, the senior "kingmaker", have embarked on an ugly display of bickering and backstabbing over who should inherit his position as controller of the party's funds and appointments and head of its largest faction.

The 109 members of the Takeshita group, which accounts for a quarter of the party's parliamentary seats, have been trying to pick a new leader by consensus, a goal which has eluded them all week because of squabbling. Two camps have emerged.

One is led by Ichiro Osawa, a former party secretary-general and protégé of Mr Kanemaru. He has nominated Tadamasa Hata, the finance minister, as his candidate for faction chief. The other is headed by Ryutaro Hashimoto, also a former secretary-general, as faction boss. Both Mr Osawa and Mr Hashimoto are aiming ultimately to become prime minister.



Suspended animation: a baby sleeps in a cloth hanging from a roof in Kalimantan, Indonesia

Mandela's bodyguard 'tortured ANC men'

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

NELSON Mandela's bodyguard, M.B. "Jomo" Mavuso, was named by a newspaper yesterday as one of the "concentration camp" guards who tortured African National Congress detainees during the movement's exile in Angola.

Other senior ANC figures were also named by The Weekly Mail as having been directly involved in assaults, torture and murder. Some members of the leadership have also been accused of failing to stop the ill-treatment of the prisoners, who were held in the camps after being suspected of betraying the movement to the South African authorities.

The leaders who, the paper says, must or should have known and did not act to stop what was this week described by the ANC's own enquiry as "staggering brutality", include Oliver Tambo, the honorary president; Chris Hani, the secretary-general of the South African Communist party; Joe Modise, the commander of the ANC's armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe and a member of the national executive committee and the national working committee of the ANC; and Joe Nhlanhla, former head of security and also currently a member of both committees.

The disclosures follow the ANC's report, published on Monday, which described the horrific treatment meted out to those held in the camps. That report did not name any of the people accused of involvement, but added a list of names privately to the copy submitted to Mr Mandela, the ANC president. He ANC has officially refused to publish the names until the accused have had a chance to defend themselves in front of an independent tribunal.

Others who have been accused by the Mail of direct involvement in abuses include Mzwandile "Mzwali" Piliso, an ANC executive member until last year and now head of its manpower department. Andrew Masondo, the ANC's chief representative in Uganda, has been accused by the Mail's sources of ordering the torture of alleged dissidents, some of whom died as a result.

Israel adds salt bullets to arsenal

Jerusalem: The Israeli military is planning to add salt bullets to its extensive arsenal of anti-riot equipment used in daily confrontations with Palestinian demonstrators in the occupied territories (Richard Beeston writes).

According to the Israeli army magazine, *Bamahaneh*, the new weapon being developed consists of a cartridge containing six pellets of crystallised salt, which will be fired like buckshot from an attachment on a normal assault rifle. The pellets cause a burning on the skin which lasts a few days.

Bank wrecked

Luanda: A bomb here wrecked a bank and damaged a hotel used by diplomats mediating in the country's political crisis. The explosion was the latest in a series of violent incidents since last month's poll defeat was rejected by UNITA rebels. (AP)

Winner named

Yaounde: A court made up of his appointees has declared Paul Biya, the Cameroon president, the winner after the country's first democratic presidential elections, independent observers said the poll was marred by widespread irregularities. (AP)

Victims dug out

San Salvador: More victims, mostly children, were unearthed from a mass grave at El Mozote, northeast El Salvador. About 1,000 civilians are believed to have been killed during a four-day massacre in 1981. (AP)

Aquino libelled

Manila: A columnist and his publisher were jailed for two years and ordered to pay \$50,000 damages to Corason Aquino, the former Philippines president, after claiming she hid under her bed during a 1987 coup attempt.

Deadly service

Oakland: Research by the University of California has found that non-smoking waiters and waitresses are up to two times more likely to die from lung cancer as other non-smokers. (Reuters)

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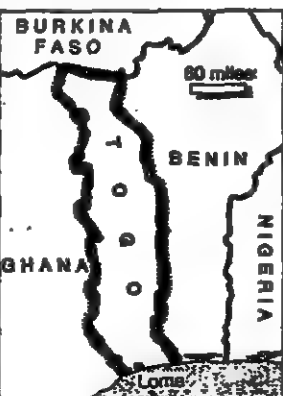
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Togolese soldiers free MPs

FROM ALAIN BOMMEVEL IN LOME

TOGOLESE troops yesterday released parliamentarians they had held hostage for 25 hours, demanding millions of pounds in the latest showdown between security forces and the interim authorities. Several employees came out of the congress building on foot, followed by members of the republic high council in cars.

A source close to President Edem, the Togolese military ruler for a quarter of a century, said the soldiers "had got what they wanted". The troops, holding more than 40 hostages at machinegun-point, had demanded the return of funds they had been forced to pay over the years to the former sole party, the Togolese People's Rally. Cardinal Philippe Kpodzo, the Roman Catholic leader and the Speaker of parliament, had pushed through a bill "ordering the banks to release the funds", the source said. The national conference that set up Togo's interim administration froze the assets of the party, about £15 million, in August last year. (AFP)

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DIARY

Scuppering of Kinnock

AS NEIL Kinnock once more ponders his future, it seems that the objections to John Major voiced by Tory backbenchers were not the only thing that finally stopped him becoming a European commissioner. It now emerges that one of the main stumbling blocks was Kinnock's own grandiose idea of the brief he wanted.

Kinnock and Jacques Delors had discussions last summer, during which Kinnock expressed a strong interest in the social affairs portfolio. "He would only have considered going to Brussels in a role in which he believed he could have real influence over affairs in Britain," says a Labour source.

Yet much as Delors saw Kinnock as a natural ally, he recognised, too, that seeing Kinnock holding the social affairs brief when Britain has opted out of the social chapter would have been just too much for the government to stomach. He told the former Labour leader that he did not think he could deliver. "It would have been like giving Denmark the defence portfolio," joked a Brussels observer.

Things then started to grow really complicated. Sir Leon Brittan, the other British commissioner, had his own views about seniority, and John Smith was said to be keen to see his predecessor out of the way. By the end, Kinnock was telling friendly journalists that under the circumstances he did not want a job in Brussels anyway and had not been an "open contender".

Song in her heart

JUDY Campbell, who gave the first ever rendition of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square", will be repeating the performance for the first time in 42 years next month. She has agreed to sing the song that became a theme-tune of war-



time Britain when she joins several hundred guests at the launch of Lucinda Lambton's latest book, *The Magnificent Menagerie*.

Other attractions will include a smattering of dogs which have been asked along as chaperones. Canine dress for the day is bows and bells, and unsuitably attired dogs will not be admitted.

Shadowy dealings

MEANWHILE, Labour is facing another Euro-storm as the Tribune Group, of which Neil Kinnock and half of the shadow cabinet remain fully-paid up members, plans to publish an anti-Maastricht pamphlet. This week the 22 Labour MEPs in the group suspended their membership in protest, claiming they had not even been consulted on the document, which is due to be presented at the party's European conference in November.

"We were extremely annoyed that the first we heard about the pamphlet was this week," says Wayne David, the MEP for South Wales. "This is clearly a crude means of trying deliberately to exclude us from any consultation."

Captain's log

AFTER resigning from the board of Mirror Group Newspapers, perhaps Joe Haines will want to use his retirement to revise some of the opinions expressed in his notorious official biography, *Maxwell*.

Yet according to Nick Davies, the former *Mirror* foreign editor whose *The Unknown Maxwell* appears on November 5, the anniversary of the captain's death, Haines will find it hard. Maxwell himself certainly thought so. Davies once asked Maxwell why he employed Haines to write his biography.

"Because after he had written one biography of me he could never write another," Maxwell replied. He knew full well that when Haines had left Downing Street, he had written a devastating account of the more ludicrous antics of the Wilson administration. Maxwell was determined that Haines would never do the same to him.

Whatever happened to the broody and bowler? Sitting next to Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, when the asylum bill was launched this week was a striking individual in ponytail and gold earring. Stand up Peter Wrench, the senior civil servant in charge of piloting the bill through Parliament. "He is famous not just for the hair but his flamboyant ties," says a proud colleague. *Yes? How dreadfully conventional.*

Kenneth Baker celebrates the anarchic art of George Cruikshank, master of political caricature

The scourge of authority

George Cruikshank was the last of a line of brilliantly savage caricaturists who flourished from 1760 to 1820. The greatest of these was Gillray but there was also the rather gentler Rowlandson and a host of others including Sayers, Dighton, Darley and George's father, Isaac.

Born 200 years ago, George was brought up in his father's studio — "I was cradled in caricature" — and learnt by finishing some of the drawings started by Gillray. He lived on until the 1870s, but he changed direction and became a book illustrator when the fashion of selling separate caricatures faded and publishers found it easier to sell their books with pictures. The unknown Dickens was glad that Cruikshank illustrated his first book, *Sketches by Boz*, while his drawings in *Oliver Twist* of Oliver asking for more and Fagin in the death cell are stored in the pictorial memory of millions.

But for me his best work is his earliest: the caricatures that he published from 1810 to 1821. As newspapers in the late 18th century did not have illustrations, a flourishing trade developed of shops selling separately printed caricatures covering the political issues of the day. These were etched by the artist on copper and about 1,000 copies were run off — they were sold for sixpence plain and a shilling coloured in about 20 shops in central London.

Crowds used to gather outside Hannah Humphrey's famous shop in St James's Street to see the latest scurrilous attacks on the king, Napoleon or the leading politicians who came to be recognised by the public through their caricatures.

These artists were all living close to the breadline. They were paid 25 or 30 shillings for one caricature. At the height of his popularity, Cruikshank managed to raise this to three guineas. In order to live, they had to produce a lot of etchings and some were openly for hire by the politicians.

As a boy of 15 during the closing stages of the Napoleonic war, George helped his father with cartoons attacking Napoleon. In one, Napoleon, who had just been exiled to Elba, sits not upon a throne, but a chamberpot; the cannon is made from his old boot and he has an enema busy under his arm.

Napoleon, too, knew the power of the cartoon because he instructed his minister of police to get caricaturists to lampoon George III and Pitt. Both Cruikshank and Gillray at the height of their powers had real political influence.

The art of caricature is to hold the subject up to ridicule through distortion and exaggeration: bottoms are large and overflowing; paunches and bottoms burst through breeches; the royal family was a drunken and immoral gang; and politicians either had their hands in other people's pockets or up somebody else's skirt. There is irreverence, sometimes anger, always scorn, and all verging into hilarious anarchy. The great caricaturists had to rein in and focus the anarchic potential of their art.



An adulterous pair: Cruikshank's scathing commentary on George IV's hypocritical investigation of Queen Caroline's infidelity was relished by the general public

Professor Robert Patten in his excellent new book, *George Cruikshank's Life, Times and Art, Vol 1 1792-1835* (Lutterworth Press, £35) puts it well: "In the caricaturist's theatre each man and woman had a price; the exchange of power, money or sex becomes a quintessential transaction that explains all that goes wrong."

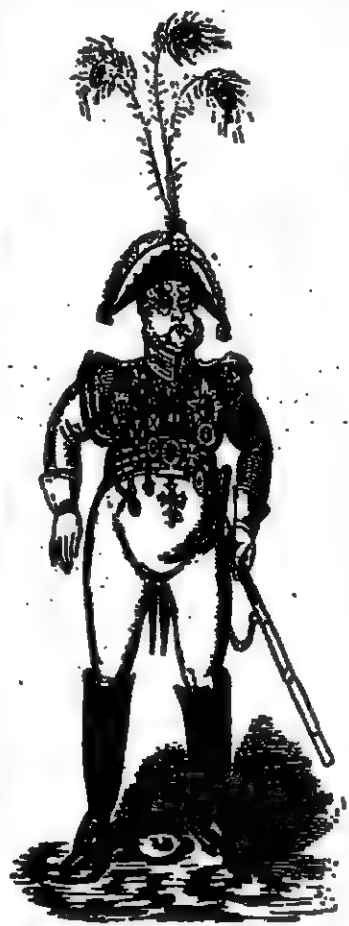
In 1812, Isaac Cruikshank died of drink and by then Gillray had sunk into madness. At the age of 20, it was up to George to continue their great tradition. One of his favourite targets was the Prince Regent. In one cartoon, Cruikshank used the newly invented bicycle in a splendid drawing to depict the Prince of Wales being ridden by his mistress, Lady Hertford. She is clearly in charge and the medallion around her neck is the George and Dragon.

The Prince Regent tried to stop such caricatures by ordering the attorney-general to prosecute the artists. But, to their great credit, London juries did not convict. When he ascended the throne as George IV in 1820, he bought up whole issues of cartoons, including the copper plates, in order to destroy them.

In 1819-20, the country was close to revolution. The government introduced the most draconian measures; Habeas Corpus had been suspended; political meetings were banned; a newspaper tax was



The Freeborn Englishman (left) and the Dandy of Sixty



introduced to put the price of newspapers beyond the reach of ordinary people. Cruikshank responded by producing his cartoon of a free born Englishman: John Bull emaciated, padlocked, manacled and ragged, clutching in his bound hands a paper saying Freedom of the Press, as Magna Carta is trampled upon. The attorney-general said it was "an indecent caricature".

In the same year, Cruikshank joined William Hone, a radical publisher, to produce the first popular political pamphlet called *The Political House that Jack Built*. Instead of copper etchings that had to be printed separately, Cruikshank used woodcut engravings that could be printed alongside Hone's satirical poem. The pamphlet went to over 20 editions in six months and was called "gunpowder in boxwood". One of the illustrations was the Dandy of Sixty, a man of vain pomposity where the Prince of Wales feathers are replaced by peacock feathers and, hanging among all his Orders is a cockatoo.

King George was so appalled at these attacks that in June he paid Cruikshank £100 (nearly £4,400 today) to secure a pledge "not to caricature His Majesty in any immoral situation". Cruikshank stuck precisely to those terms and

only drew pictures of the king as a drunken debauchee. The situation changed, however, when Caroline, the Queen Consort, decided to return to England to claim her right to be queen. She had an Italian lover, who was her major domo, and she soon became a figure of fun. Cruikshank supported her cause.

In his famous cartoon, George and Caroline are depicted in green bags (the green bags were equivalent to today's red dispatch boxes). A commission had been set up to investigate the alleged adultery of Queen Caroline and the evidence had been submitted to Parliament in green bags. This caught the public's imagination and it was not long before the wags claimed that when it came to adultery the king's bag would be much bigger than the queen's. This superb cartoon of the two bags, with its pear-shaped figures, predates the cartoons of Philippon and Daumier by 30 years.

By this time, Cruikshank was following his own father. Hone urged him not to spend so much time on "blue ruin and the dories". His successors, Doyle and Leech, didn't have his bite, anger or vulgarity. The great age of caricature had ended. *Punch* was about to take over.

The author, former home secretary, is MP for Mole Valley.

Deception and the art of desert wars

Alistair Horne on the obstacles facing Allied generals at El Alamein fifty years ago and in the battle against Saddam

An 18th-century French journalist, Antoine de Rivarol, wrote caustically of the Allied coalitions confronting revolutionary France: they were, he said, "always late by a year, by an army, and by an idea". That the same, fortunately, could not be written about the American-dominated but fragile coalition which smashed Saddam Hussein's vast army, is principally thanks to one man — General Norman Schwarzkopf.

I first met the general in the Gulf a few weeks before the unleashing of Desert Storm. At first glimpse it was not altogether easy to take seriously the bear-like figure, bursting out of his desert fatigues. But within five minutes it was plain that here was a most remarkable man.

Speaking very openly, he made it clear that the lessons of Vietnam had been learnt, and that the coming battle would be "short and sharp". I was able, without much difficulty, to write at the time that he would prove "a Patton not a Monty", and that — rather than butt his head up frontally against Saddam's formidable fixed defences — he would perform (in American football parlance) "an end run far to the west".

And so it was. But what history now reveals is that, in addition to being a brilliant strategist and battlefield manager, he was also a diplomat and politician of quite staggering ability and a man of great personal charm. For a parallel, one has to reach back to the second world war, and even that leaves one short.

Even though his highly readable memoirs, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (Bantam, £17.99), are ghosted, his

personality strides out of every page, Norman Schwarzkopf's life has been the story of contemporary America. Commissioned in the wake of the Korean war, he went through the hell of Vietnam as a young infantry officer. The unending slovenliness and incompetence of America's officer corps made the profoundest impression on him. On Christmas day, the spectacle of a junior officer relaxing in the mess when he should have been staring a foxhole with the troops in the jungle, sent him into one of his legendary "ballistic" rages — and the captain back to the States. Returning home, he was shocked to find himself cold-shouldered by an anti-war public. Like Monty, his army's debility drove him to becoming a reformer, something of a maverick, and, clearly, not an easy man to serve.

While he was in London this week, launching his book, I asked General Schwarzkopf, a commander unusually well-grounded in military history, what had been the precedents for his classic battle plan of Desert Storm. The Masterplan plan which had defeated France by splitting the Allied armies in May 1940 was one; though more immediate, he said, had his forerunner, the Schlieffen plan of 1914.

This great turning movement was intended to swing the Kaiser's army round behind Paris, taking the French from the rear. It failed — just; but it was a similar manoeuvre, of far greater daring, which enabled General Schwarzkopf to pin Saddam's Republican Guard against the Euphrates within a hundred hours. In executing this movement, with its bold



Schwarzkopf (left), a contrast to the inexperienced Eisenhower



shift of divisions from one flank to the other, he admitted that he had particularly been aided by Montgomery's brilliant deception plan at El Alamein: "I thought about that a lot." On which of the great US commanders of the second world war — Eisenhower, Bradley and Patton — did he then like to model himself, I asked. "A bit of all three," he replied: "for his diplomatic skill, Bradley for his care of his troops, Patton for his drive."

He did not, in the style of Monty, have a portrait of his adversary, Saddam, above his desk, "though I had a mental picture of his character, and people kept sending me wooden dolls to stick pins in". Nor, as rumour had it, did he have a photo of Monty at hand. Yet certain parallels do spring to mind; he was the ruthless reformer, dedicated to looking after his men and husbanding lives as top priorities. At least in the context of timing, he was perhaps more Monty than Patton, refusing — with the lessons

of Vietnam in mind — to attack until assured of overwhelming superiority and total readiness. ("Why won't he attack?" they complained back in Washington, echoing Churchill in 1942.) Such was the scale of the victory that, using what General Schwarzkopf calls "20-20 hindsight", one now tends to forget what a formidable force, on paper, Saddam had been able to muster.

In contrast to the inexperienced, easy-going Eisenhower, General Schwarzkopf kept his generals on the tightest of reins, never letting them behave like runaway prima donnas, as Patton did. Commanders like the unfortunate General Franks of VII Corps, accused of moving too slowly, constantly wanting to regroup as if confronted by a Warsaw Pact army or German Wehrmacht, must have had a rough time from storming Normandy. On the other hand, General Schwarzkopf's respect for his boss, Colin Powell, was total. "Half general, half politician", Powell had the confidence of President

Bush in a way that Norman Schwarzkopf could only compare with Roosevelt's great second world war chief-of-staff, George C. Marshall — the equivalent of Churchill's Alanbrooke. Though not as fiercely critical of defence secretary Dick Cheney as Sir Peter de la Billière was of Tom King in the British context, he speaks with fury of Mr Cheney coming up with his own civilian armchair critic's plan ("as bad as it could possibly be") at the worst possible moment.

At the glittering Imperial War Museum reception this week, where General Schwarzkopf was reunited with General de la Billière and most of the British Gulf war commanders, there was frequent reference to Montgomery. It was, almost to the day, the 50th anniversary of El Alamein. But where the parallels fall down is in the uneasy, abrasive relationships that existed between Monty and his American superior, Ike. Monty, the superb professional, battle-hardened in two world wars, came to despise Ike for his lack of wartime command experience, and of strategic grip; but failed to appreciate the scale of the Supreme Allied Commander's problems in running an immense military coalition.

By contrast, Generals Schwarzkopf and de la Billière mirrored each other in professionalism and battle experience. "There was an instantaneous rapport between us," the former told me. "There was a soldier you could trust." "There was a soldier you could trust," sentiments that have been precisely echoed by General de la Billière. Of course, the numerical relationships were radically different; whereas at D-Day 1944, British forces were virtually at parity with the Americans, in the Gulf it was one to ten. Yet the good vibes between the two must have aided incalculably the smooth running of the coalition.

General Schwarzkopf is, to my mind, excessively modest about his

problems, compared with Eisenhower's. Admittedly, Ike had vastly greater numbers, a longer campaign and a much more dangerous foe — as well as those prickly subordinates, Monty and Patton. But he did not have the daily diplomatic stresses of smoothing the sensibilities of Arab partners; where a complete ban on alcohol and pin-ups had to be rigorously observed; Christmas carols transmitted without words so as not to offend Moslem susceptibilities; and a semblance of decision-sharing with the Saudi hosts maintained.

In one respect above all others Ike was fortunate: in the absence of a high-tech media. General Schwarzkopf agreed with me that had there been, in 1944, instantaneous television coverage on Omaha Beach such as flowed hourly out of the Gulf, there would have been no D-Day plus two. More important, by playing on dovish sympathies in both Washington and London, the media undoubtedly accelerated the end of the battle — to the subsequent benefit of Saddam.

It was, he added, "a management problem; do you realise, in Vietnam during the Tet offensive, we had 80 press, and news came on TV 36 hours later; in the Gulf we had 2,060 — and instantaneous TV — how do you control such a huge number?"

This was a concern vigorously echoed by General de la Billière who had Tom King, breathing down the telephone every time Jeremy Paxman asked an awkward question. All agreed that in the Falklands and the Gulf, short wars with limited casualties, were extremely lucky. But what about future conflicts? "I don't know," admits General Schwarzkopf, "perhaps censorship is the answer..."

Alistair Horne is currently working on a study of Montgomery.

John Major

al caricature
ty



TOMLINSON TREATMENT

■ Beware physicians who protest too much

The government's creaking political machine has failed to deliver the right message about Sir Bernard Tomlinson's report on health provision in London. Unlike Michael Heseltine's poorly researched and inadequately argued case for pit closures, the Tomlinson report presents a convincing and generally positive message. Yet from the title at the top of yesterday's press release — "Tomlinson Report Recommends Shake-Up in London's Health Services" — to the defensive tone of Virginia Bottomley's statement in parliament, in which she refused even to promise that revenues from selling hospital sites would stay within the health service, the government seemed intent on accentuating the largely spurious negatives and downplaying the benefits that should flow from Tomlinson's plans.

The Tomlinson report is not primarily about closing hospitals. Still less is it about "allowing one thousand years of history and service to be destroyed as a result of market forces," to quote one emotionally overwrought London MP from the supposedly pro-market Liberal Democrat Party.

The report's most important section is about improving the facilities and medical care provided by Britain's most over-worked and inadequately funded group of general practitioners. Inner London lags well behind most of the country in the number of GPs per head and the quality of service they provide. Yet it has far more hospital beds and higher spending on acute medical care than any other region. The main conclusion of the Tomlinson report is the one that has been obvious to every independent authority to have reviewed London's medical requirements. Resources should be shifted from the hospitals, where they are underused, to the GPs, where they are most needed.

Tomlinson's second main recommendation is to move underemployed doctors and underused hospital beds out of cramped and

inefficient Victorian buildings in sparsely-inhabited parts of central London, into more modern facilities nearer to patients' homes. This relocation of specialised medical services, has provoked predictable outrage. Yet the proposed cutbacks are not nearly as tough as the headlines suggest.

The anti-Tomlinson campaign is claiming, for example, that ten of the famous London hospitals will close forever. These include such guaranteed sympathy-winners as the Royal Marsden cancer hospital, the Queen Elizabeth hospital for children and the Queen Charlotte maternity hospital. Most horrifying of all is said to be the bulldozing of St Bartholomew's hospital, an institution founded one thousand years ago in the City (total resident population today, fewer than 5,000) and home of "Western Europe's only unit dealing with complications of children's eye cancer".

Almost of these claims are simply untrue. Tomlinson would not stop cancer research and treatment at the Edwardian Royal Marsden, but simply move it to modern facilities two miles up the Fulham Road at the Charing Cross Hospital. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, already administered as part of Great Ormond Street, would not disgorge its sick babies on the streets, but treat them at another site in Homerton.

If the Tomlinson proposals would actually improve the health service, why are the doctors up in arms? The likeliest answer emerges from the report's third main recommendation, of which most public protesters neither know nor care. From the doctors' point of view the most important facilities that Tomlinson wants to move out of London are not hospital beds, but a limited number of university teaching posts, research centres and senior consultancies. At present these can conveniently be combined with hugely lucrative private practices in Harley Street. Physicians, heal thyself.

A TURKISH REALITY

■ Kurdish culture cannot be wished away

One of Suleyman Demirel's first acts last year after being asked to form the Turkish government was to recognise what he called the "Kurdish reality". To an outside world, acknowledgment of the ethnic identity of one fifth of the country's 60 million population seems common sense. In the context of Turkish politics, the words were brave.

The very word Kurdish is controversial within the Turkish vocabulary. Although it is accepted that Kurds exist, they are not considered a minority. Although ethnic Kurds reach high ranks in the civil service, politics and the military, the necessary condition for this is that they speak and behave in public like everyone else.

While many Turkish Kurds, particularly those who live in the west of the country are happy to assimilate, others resent having to pay that price. The belief in the largely Kurdish south-east is that the coalition government has done little to dislodge the army and police from doing pretty much as they please. This means torturing suspects and intimidating of people suspected of being Kurdish nationalist partisans.

This is a particularly bitter charge against Mr Demirel, a man who was himself twice overthrown by the Turkish military. The possibility is now that Turkey, on the verge of shaking off for ever the charge of "being not quite democratic", will again be dragged before international opinion critical of its performance on human rights.

If Turkey's friends have held back from criticism it is because they believe that Turkey faces a thuggish and Stalinist opponent in the form of the Kurdistan Workers Party or PKK. The PKK's strategy of violence is aimed to fuel through acts of

violence the unlicensed authority of Turkey's security forces and thus to prove that the Turkish state is incapable of reform.

What Mr Demirel now appears to be doing is to give his own military their head. The Turkish army is operating far into northern Iraqi territory, in land held by the Iraqi Kurds, in the attempt to destroy the PKK's mountain bases. The Iraqi Kurds themselves, fed up with giving sanctuary to agents provocateurs, have themselves begun a similar operation against the PKK.

The Turkish government cannot afford to continue to sanction a policy of internal repression that divides the loyalties of its own people. To introduce reform, Mr Demirel must convince his own supporters that genuine displays of Kurdish identity will not inflame Balkan-style intolerance.

Some reforms could be made tomorrow. Although Turks can now watch uncensored films on private television stations beamed from Paris, they cannot legally listen to even a news bulletin in Kurdish. It simply does not make sense for Mr Demirel to maintain, as he does, that such broadcasts would threaten the unity of the Turkish state. In a pluralist world, the reverse is true.

At frequent conferences staged at Istanbul's new five-star hotels, messages are simultaneously translated into the ears of visiting notables that Turkey — democratic, secular, and committed to the market — has become a stable vessel in a region of turbulent change. In points through the Kurdish south-east, the boat has sprung a leak. These leaks have to be patched if Turkey is to become the democratic society it wants to be, and if it is to play the international role in the region that it should.

DESERT TURNING POINT

■ Why we should all remember Alamein

Tomorrow the old soldiers and the statesmen gather in the wastelands of Egypt's western desert to commemorate a battle that has become one of the most evocative names in modern warfare. Fifty years ago, at an insignificant railway halt called El Alamein the battle opened up to begin a 12-day battle that turned the tide of the Desert War.

That was not all that it turned. Churchill said of the Battle of Egypt in his speech at the Mansion House on November 10, 1942: "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." Complex events such as world wars never have simple crises or climaxes. But, making allowances for authorial exaggeration, Churchill was not far wrong when he wrote in *The Hinge of Fate* that before Alamein the Allies never had a victory; after Alamein, they never had a defeat. It was the moment when the embattled and battered United Kingdom recognised that it was not going to lose.

For the next three years these fiftieth anniversaries of the Second World War are coming up not single spots but in battalions. They do some harm in a world where the power structure has suddenly dissolved, and the nations are struggling to find a way forward to a new world order. They encourage the British in their looking backwards to the days when they were a great power, and stood alone. Already the political elite in Bonn have shown that they want nothing to do with what they see as a sentimental military show. John Major and

Malcolm Rifkind are representing Britain. The other Allies are sending their defence ministers. Germany will be represented by its minister of science and technology.

With the exception of Trafalgar, which can be defined as another sudden and unexpected and clear-cut turning-back of an attempt to dominate Europe, Britain prefers to celebrate its defeats rather than its victories: the battles of Hastings and Dunkirk rather than Crécy and the D-Day Normandy landings.

But there was something special about Alamein. In the Desert War for the first time there were numerous pictures, both still and moving, whose grainy nostalgia is irresistible to television producers and magazine editors. It was fought in a virtually empty arena, and was therefore more clear-cut than the confusion of most modern battles. It was perhaps the last war to retain some pretence of chivalry, because of terrain and conditions that were harsh and alien to all combatants. Rommel became a hero admired almost as much by his enemies as his own men.

The Desert Rats of Montgomery's 8th Army and the veterans of Rommel's Afrika Korps have been sentimentalised by film and print into heroic puppets of the big lie that there is something romantic about war. Many of them were brave, above and beyond the call of duty. And it is fitting that the survivors should tomorrow commemorate the most historic moment in their lives, and the brave men who did their duty on both sides, and paid the final price.

BBC board and public interest

From the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the BBC

Sir, We would like to put on record how the BBC is governed and how the governors' role should evolve. We write with the support and agreement of all governors.

The board provides a buffer between government and the BBC, underwriting the BBC's independence. We are responsible for oversight of the BBC, for agreeing its strategy and considering issues of broad policy.

We do not involve ourselves in its day-to-day management, for we are not professional broadcasters. We ensure that significant policy decisions take account of the public interest. Last week, for instance, we were insisting that Radio 4 should remain on long wave until we are satisfied with progress on FM.

We are also responsible for the health of the BBC's finances. The audit committee, a board subcommittee established by the governors under the chairmanship of Lord Barnett, is currently examining an overspend in BBC Television. It will report to the board once its work is complete.

We have given a great deal of thought to accountability and what it means for the BBC. We recognise that the public interest is best served by a clear separation of powers, between an executive management on the one hand and a regulatory body on the other, with authority to hold management to account. We also recognise the need to clarify and codify the roles of both boards, so that the public may know exactly where responsibility lies, and how it is exercised.

Improved accountability is a key aspect of the case for charter renewal. So is transparent efficiency. So is a clear editorial purpose. These are our goals and we mean to achieve them.

The governors met in the summer of 1991 to consider who should lead the BBC as director-general in the run up to the charter. We agreed that John Birt had been an outstanding deputy director-general and that he was the right man for the future.

At the same time we recognised the contribution Michael Checkland had made and continued to make in leading the BBC. We decided his contract should be extended for a further year, and that John Birt should be confirmed as his successor. Both accepted this offer.

Since then the two have worked closely together, particularly on charter renewal, as co-authors of the document to be published in the autumn. As they made clear at the Royal Television Society's symposium on Tuesday (report, October 21) they stand four-square and together behind the BBC's editorial vision, its resource policies and all other aspects of the BBC's case.

The governors know the period of change before us is greater and more challenging than any we have yet faced. We have no doubt we are set on the right course, with the strategy and the incoming leadership to see the journey through.

Yours faithfully,
MARMADUKE HUSSEY

(Chairman),
BARNETT (Vice-Chairman),
British Broadcasting Corporation,
Broadcasting House, W1,
October 23.

Tunnel rail link

From Lady Corianda Bain Smith

Sir, Your report of October 20 on cuts in the cost of building the Channel tunnel rail link makes no mention of freight. Is there really a "supertrain" which can carry freight over this roller-coaster ride, with its swirling tight curves and gradients of 1 in 40, and why has this marvel not previously been revealed?

Curiously, the only part of the route on which no realignments have taken place is the 17-mile stretch between Delfing and Ashford — the very section which BR has said is unsuitable for freight. It would therefore appear there is no intention to build a fully shared passenger and freight railway with passing loops on a two-track system, as provided in the German Neubaustrecke and proposed in the Rail-Europe scheme.

It seems that what little freight the link will carry may be restricted to parcels and the limited amounts which can be carried on trains with performance characteristics similar to the passenger trains.

Since the chosen corridor precludes expansion to four-track, is the option to carry classic, or conventional, freight to be closed for ever?

Yours sincerely,
C. BAIN SMITH,
Wickens Manor,
Charing, Nr Ashford, Kent,
October 22.

Ministerial secrecy

From Lord Finsberg

Sir, As a former minister in Mrs Thatcher's government I must correct Simon Jenkins (article, October 10) on the issue of confidentiality. Ministers do sign an Official Secrets Act letter. I still have the one in my file that I signed in 1979 and I consider this binds me permanently.

Yours faithfully,
FINSBERG,
House of Lords.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 071-782 5000

Risks to health of our high-fat diet

From the Director of the Family Heart Association

Sir, Although your report, "Experts clash over health risk of a high-fat diet" (October 19), cites evidence in *Circulation*, the journal of the American Heart Association, as indicating that "universal screening and treatment of people with high blood cholesterol should end", the article adds that "intervention should be limited to those in our population for whom the benefits clearly predominate over the harms (those with coronary heart disease [CHD] or other reasons for being at very high risk of CHD death)".

The "other reasons" relate to the presence of risk factors such as high blood pressure, smoking or family history of CHD. Even in women, whose cholesterol level may be marginally higher without harm, these factors are relevant.

In the United Kingdom one person in 500 has a genetic condition indicating their vulnerability caused by an abnormally high level of cholesterol. Up to 70 per cent of the population possess the other risk factors mentioned. Given the criteria outlined in the *Circulation* article, up to three quarters of the British population would be justified in seeking information about their cholesterol levels.

The relationship between high cholesterol and coronary heart disease remains undisputed and a modified diet, low in saturated fat and high in fibre, has been clearly shown to be beneficial.

Yours faithfully,
DON W. STEELE, Director,
Family Heart Association,
Wesley House, 7 High Street,
Kidlington, Oxford,
October 21.

From the Chairman of the Royal College of General Practitioners

Sir, You do a disservice (leading article, "Excess of advice", October 19) to those who are trying to battle against the appalling toll of heart disease in the UK. As you point out, cholesterol testing is not the only risk factor for heart disease. Yet there is evidence to suggest that cholesterol has an important role to play in heart disease, particularly when there are other risk factors involved, such as smoking or high blood pressure.

Your spectre of "whole swaths of the population... (defined) as potential recipients for powerful drugs" is unlikely: in the majority of cases of raised cholesterol GPs will need to go no further than suggesting diet and lifestyle changes. You also say that the concentration on cholesterol is diverting attention from smoking, which "remains by far the most important" risk factor for heart disease. Tell that to the Japanese, whose menfolk smoke like chimneys, while having a low rate of heart disease.

Obviously everyone has to die: premature death is what we are trying to prevent. One in five men in Britain have a heart attack before they reach the age of 65, and many of those will

not work again. Apart from the distress, anguish and financial difficulties this causes to their families, heart disease costs the UK economy an estimated £1.4 billion a year in lost production. There is thus an economic as well as social justification for prevention.

As a GP, I have no interest in "planning and banning". My patients can accept or reject the advice I give them. That does not mean that I should avoid giving it. You say that "description should never descend into prescription until certainty has been achieved". Certainty is very difficult to achieve in medicine: for instance, we cannot yet be certain that smoking causes lung cancer, only that there is a strong associative link.

Doctors have to work on the best information available at the time. The advice we give a decade hence may change as a result of scientific enquiry, but that is no argument for sitting back and doing nothing.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN WAINE
(Chairman of Council),
Royal College of General Practitioners,
14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, SW7.

From Dr R. W. A. Linden

Sir, You say, as far as our health is concerned, that "moderation in all things remains the only sensible advice", along with "a healthy scepticism towards the planners and banners who would dictate everyone's lives if only they could". However, many years ago I was told that the most important thing was to outlive the present theory.

So far so good!
Yours faithfully,
ROGER W. A. LINDEN,
King's College, Physiology Group,
Strand, WC2.

Coffee and cholesterol

From Ms Sophia Papadopoulos

Sir, Heather Kirby's suggestion ("Cholesterol: how low to go", Body and Mind, October 14) that drinking other than filtered coffee can raise cholesterol levels is factually incorrect.

Research in the UK (*European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, vol 43) has specifically shown that instant coffee (the most popular type in the UK) has no effects on blood cholesterol. Only the Scandinavian method of preparing coffee (rarely used in this country, and involving boiling ground coffee for long periods) produces a brew which can elevate blood cholesterol.

No other type of coffee studied — including instant, drip-filtered and decaffeinated — has such properties; and the cholesterol-raising lipid can be removed from boiled coffee by using a paper filter.

Yours sincerely,
S. PAPADOPOULOS,
Coffee Science Information Centre,
Cherwell House,
Little Tew, Oxford,
October 21.

and identify any particular species in order to distinguish it more clearly from some newly discovered similar species. Without a reliable atlas giving the former names of places which have been renamed, the stability of biological nomenclature would be jeopardised.

Thanks to successive editions of *The Times Atlas* we have reliable records of all significant place-names for the last 96 years, showing where known species were first found. Let us hope that these species will survive many future editions.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM WHITE (Editor,
Medical & Veterinary Entomology),
105 Broomway Gardens,
Ham, Richmond, Surrey.

From Mr Alan Gray

Sir, Your report of October 14 on the world's shifting political map must make natives of South American states laugh sardonically. Mocked by many for their instability, they can point out that the map of their continent has hardly changed in 150 years.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN GRAY,
Swanmore South,
Honiton Road, Staplehay,
Taunton, Somerset.

began his short-lived reign as Kaiser Friedrich III, King of Prussia.

Neville Chamberlain was not "on his way to collect a piece of paper" when he stayed at the Petersberg hotel at Bad Godesberg (September 23-4, 1938): after Chamberlain's visit to Berchtesgaden on September 15, Hitler, who wanted to save "the old man" the long journey, had suggested to meeting halfway at the next meeting.

During the Bad Godesberg meeting none of the participants could have thought of "Munich" (September 30), let alone "the piece of paper".

Yours sincerely,
H. W. KOCH,
University of York,
Department of History,
Heslington, York.

Weekend Money letters, page 28

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Huskies a 'stupid' bar to polar treaty

From Sir Vivian Fuchs, FRS

Sir, Your report, "Britain and Australia poles apart on huskies" (October 20), highlights one of the few, perhaps the only, stupid requirements of the impending international treaty on conservation in the Antarctic.

The British Antarctic Survey has employed huskies for 50 years at various stations. I and ten others lived with 100 of them from 1948 to 1950. During those two years I saw one penguin killed when it approached a line of tethered dogs and stood pecking threateningly at the nose of one.

The dogs do not range free at any time. The suggestion which you report that they are a threat because they growl at baby seals and penguins is ridiculous. So is any suggestion by conservationists that a treaty could not be signed because two teams of huskies (20 animals) are allowed to live out their lives on a continent the size of Europe and Australia together.

The few seals taken for two dog teams during a year are negligible compared to Nature's predation — we once found 2,000 seals dead at one site distant from any human habitation. No evidence of seals infected by dogs has been found in 50 years and the last dogs imported by the British Antarctic Survey were three taken south in 1952. On the other hand, care has to be taken that the dogs do not themselves acquire worms etc. from the seals eaten.

I should add that I have not discussed these matters with anyone at the British Antarctic Survey and the opinions are mine, based on some years of dog handling.

Yours faithfully,
VIVIAN FUCHS,
106 Barton Road, Cambridge,
October 21.

Genocide in Bosnia

From Lord Hylton

Sir, Mr Cosic and Mr Panic, the president and prime minister of Serbia and Montenegro, are expressing admirable sentiments about the conclusion of a Bosnian peace treaty. While they do so, the vile business of "ethnic cleansing" continues and no one knows whether concentration camps still function.

Sarajevo is shelled by heavy artillery, mortars and tanks, wounding scores of people in one recent day (report, October 19). The Serbian aim appears to be to cut off all water and electricity supplies and to destroy as many houses as possible, so that most of the 350,000 ethnically mixed inhabitants will die this winter.

The United Nations and Nato have decided not to intervene militarily, and only to provide humanitarian aid. This is regularly interrupted by attacks on convoys and aircraft. The Sarajevo airlift will also be limited by winter fogs. Other besieged towns only receive sporadic supplies.

In these circumstances, it is only just that the UN arms embargo should be lifted from Bosnia. This would make it possible for the Bosnian people and their democratically elected and internationally recognised government to defend themselves effectively against genocidal attacks. These attacks are inspired and sustained by forces from outside Bosnia.

Yours faithfully,
HYLTON,
House of Lords,
October 19.

Caribbean poet

From the High Commissioner for Eastern Caribbean States

Sir, "Trinidad's quiet man hailed as great poet": the headline to Daniel Johnson's report of October 9 on the award of the Nobel Prize for literature to Derek Walcott reflects a misapprehension often encountered outside Caribbean and literary circles.

Derek Walcott, as Johnson acknowledges, was born in St Lucia. However, despite spending most of his professional career in Trinidad and Tobago and the USA, he has remained a citizen of the island of his birth and kept close links with it.

What is probably most pertinent in this context though, is that the imagery and inspiration of so much of Walcott's work, as he himself acknowledges, owes much to the peculiar culture and society of St Lucia.

It may be interesting to note that this Nobel Prize is the second awarded to a St Lucian. The first, for economics, was awarded to the late Professor Arthur Lewis in 1979.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD GUNN,
High Commissioner for Eastern Caribbean States,
10 Kensington Court, W8.

Pas de deux

From Major J. C. Beck

Sir, Friends of the Birmingham Royal Ballet have just received details of the castings for the next two seasons. For *The Sleeping Beauty* the castings for Aurora and the Prince include "Feb 24 at 2pm and 27: Kennedy, Nixon". I find the pairing unlikely.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER BECK,
The Braid, Little Street,
Sulgrave, Nr Banbury, Oxfordshire,
October 17.

NEWS

Major concedes on Maastricht bill

After warnings from the backbench 1922 committee, John Major tried to avoid opposition from Euro-sceptic MPs within his party by conceding that the bill to ratify the Maastricht treaty would not be railroaded through Parliament before Christmas. Page 1

Lord Tebbit urged MPs not to be swayed by any threat from the prime minister to resign; replacement of Mr Major was not "too difficult" a matter. Page 1

Blood bank chief jailed over HIV

The former head of the French transfusion service was jailed for four years for allowing HIV-contaminated blood to be given to haemophiliacs. Jean-Pierre Allain, now a Cambridge professor, got four years, two of them suspended. Pages 1, 3

Policeman banned

An off-duty policeman who paralysed a schoolboy in a hit-and-run car crash after drinking was fined £3,800 and banned from driving for seven years. Page 3

Back to the front

John Major left for Egypt and the 50th anniversary celebration of the battle of El Alamein, for the British and their new American allies a great turning point in the second world war. Page 7

Safer London

Paul Condon, 45, the new commissioner of the Metropolitan police, pledged himself to make London a safer and a better place to live. Page 5

'Renegade' claim

David Hart, a former adviser to Baroness Thatcher, said John Major and Michael Heseltine had reneged on undertakings given by senior ministers in 1985 to the Union of Democratic Mineworkers. Page 8

How many beans make a seminar?

Maths was more of a penance than a pleasure for most, but David Singmaster, organiser of Britain's first conference on the history of recreational mathematics — puzzles and brain-teasers — expects at least 130 enthusiasts at today's seminars in the South Bank University in London. Page 7

Turks move in

Turkish launched a drive with 5,000 troops across the mountainous border of northern Iraq in an attempt to drive out guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party. Page 11

UN guards grave

United Nations troops have been deployed around a mass grave near Vukovar in eastern Croatia and local Serb authorities were warned not to tamper with the evidence. Page 10

Civil civil war

Canada votes on Monday to avoid a most civil civil war, as a country celebrated for restraint and courtesy approaches its most damaging constitutional crisis. Page 12

Hong Kong fears

As Chris Patten left Peking after his first official visit, China took off the velvet gloves and raised the spectre of "turmoil" in Hong Kong if he continued efforts to expand democracy. Page 13



Wilfrid Moralee, last man up from the defunct Vane Tempest mine in Seaham yesterday, takes a final look at the colliery yard. Page 8

SPORT

Wing and a prayer: Great Britain will look to Martin Offiah, the left wing, as potential match-winner in the rugby league World Cup final at Wembley. In five years as a professional he has scored 283 tries. Page 34

Style change: Graeme Souness, the Liverpool manager, says only radical change can protect British football from kick-and-rush. Page 35

BUSINESS

Banker's odds: Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Governor of the Bank of England, retires in July next year. Odds on his successors have been affected by the impact from the BCCI affair. Page 19

Markets: The pound rose by 1.28p to DM2.4702. Against the dollar it fell 0.97 cent to \$1.6145, leaving the trade weighted index up 0.1 at 80.5. The FT-SE 100 closed 11.6 up at 2669.7. Page 22

Wondering...

Far from bewitching: The "operamusical" *Witch Which* may have wowed them in Oslo, but its first night in London leaves Benedict Nightingale wondering "Why? Why?" Weekend

Domingo turns baritone: On a new recording of Rossini's *Barber of Seville* Placido Domingo renounces his top notes to sing the baritone role of Figaro. Weekend

Screenplay control: Hollywood's screenplay market promises big bucks and superstardom to a new generation taking the words — and creative control — out of the movie directors' hands. William Cash reports. Saturday Review

Tale of two lives: John Weightman reviews the 1926-1939 letters of Jean-Paul Sartre, who seems to have been able to juggle women as he juggled concepts, to Simone Beauvoir and, just as importantly, to some others. Saturday Review

JOHN DIAMOND

In his first *New From the Front* column, John Diamond discloses that he is not a New Man. He cannot cry in groups. He cannot sit aside whole hours of the day to discuss interpersonal problems with his wife. But he can do the ironing. Saturday Review

ANDY MARTIN

Autumn has arrived, and a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of skiing. Skiing has become synonymous with sex, especially illicit or extra-marital sex. Off on a weekend skiing break? Then you have to lie about it. Weekend, page 1

ALAN COREN

"I have been given a Ralph Lauren shirt. It is a great shirt. It fits a treat." But what causes Alan Coren to think of pulling a sweater over his stylish 190 shirt if the doorbell rings? Weekend, page 8

London's health

'From the doctors' point of view the most important facilities Tomlinson wants to move out are not hospital beds, but a limited number of university teaching posts, research centres and senior consultancies. At present these can conveniently be combined with lucrative private practices in Harley Street. Physicians, heal thyself. Page 15

Desert memories

The old soldiers and the statesmen gather in Egypt's western desert to commemorate a battle that has become the most evocative place-name in modern warfare. The Desert Rats of Montgomery's 8th Army and the veterans of Rommel's Afrika Korps have been sentimentalised by film and print into heroic puppets of the big lie that there is something romantic about war. But nobody should romanticise it as anyone's finest hour. Page 15

The complete guide to the this weekend's television, plus Lynne Truss on the week that was. Weekend, pages 18,19

Perfect baby

New methods of genetic screening before conception and ultrasound scanning during pregnancy can give early warning of disease or abnormality but, Aileen Ballantyne writes, such advances also create difficult moral dilemmas

Eric idol

Leeds United footballer Eric Cantona is bringing a touch of French polish to northern grit

Cool cats

The problem with a new feline IQ test, Lynne Truss writes, is that it tests the owners' honesty rather than their pets' grey matter

Valerie Grove interview

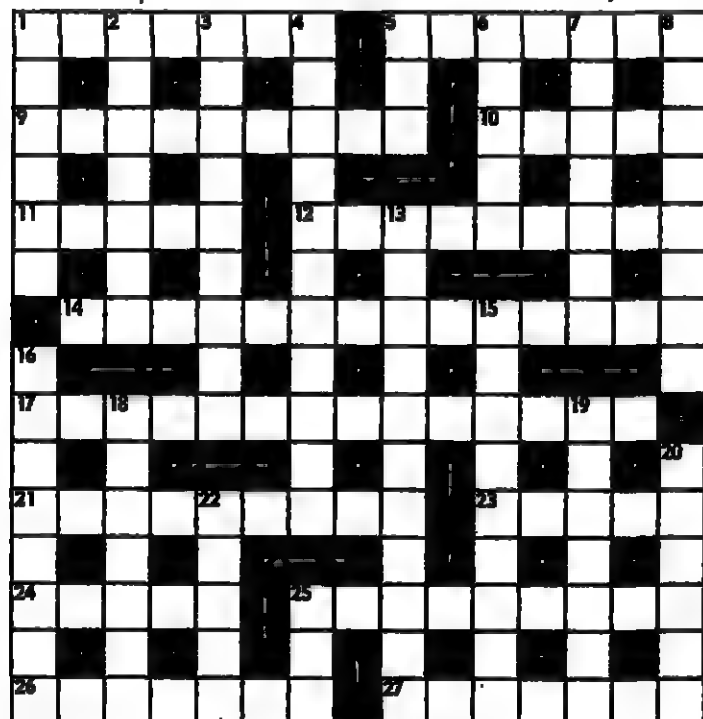
Peter Brooke's interests all seem to be informed by useful personal connections, in the classic fashion of the Tory politician. Will his love of churches give our new heritage secretary divine inspiration?

'Two able professionals with... distinct philosophies: George Bush is leary of government's skills as a problem-solver, and Bill Clinton sees government as an ally for getting things done'. USA Today

Bush has done to conservatism what no liberal opponent could have done: he has destroyed it from within. The New Republic

'There needs to be a shift in the focus of health services in London. Acute hospitals dominate, and insufficient attention is paid to services delivered in the community by GPs, health visitors and others'. Sir Bernard Tomlinson

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,058



- ACROSS
- Share expenses in journey from part of Europe (2,5)
 - Confirm what angry people have got (5,2)
 - Stepped out of transport and arrested ringleader inside (9)
 - Warning light beam redirected to right (5)
 - How different sides feature in print (5)
 - Search for oil successful, being superbly equipped (4-5)
 - Procedural rules for the suspension of sittings? (8,6)
 - How men may be moved, in general (6-3-5)
 - Au fait, initially, with small island bird (9)
 - Bones almost set without wires, I found (5)
 - Harlequin, for example, back in European city (5)
 - Performance by choir containing even number (9)
 - Manage to see what someone is saying? (7)
 - Swallowing small Scotch, an automatic way to remove bitterness (7)
- DOWN
- Fail to get contract for warehouse (6)
 - American port that's almost superfluous, it appears (7)
 - Principles of marginal importance in court decisions (9)
 - Manuscript Darwin changed in tenth revision (1,1)
 - Order a diamond, for example (3)
 - Shorten bird's tail? Rubbish! (5)
 - Girl brings in book with calculation to absorb in class (7)
 - He takes off from Port Said as ordered (8)
 - People rowing may finish up at these turtles (1,1)
 - Ordering a change in part of US border (3,6)
 - A shift among its constituents could be alarming (8)
 - Picked fish, namely char, with bread (7)
 - Soldier in the pink (7)
 - This language may be said to be somebody's responsibility (6)
 - Make steady progress in fashion (5)
 - Whence you'll get pea, say, to serve up (3)

Solution to Puzzle No 19,052

HYDRAULICS LAMB
O P F
PROPOUNDER AREA
O S D I P I C
FLAT MENSURVIR
P R A O I A R
LARBARD SLALOM
E P K N H I
BRIGHT ROYALIST
I N I N R S H
SONGSTER MOON
C I E V E O L A
T O N A CANNONBALL
T E G B I T M
PARKER WATERCRESS

Concise Crossword, page 20, Weekend Times Section

Solution to Puzzle No 19,057

STANDING ROOM
E L I T O E R P F
P R I S I N G D R A W L
U N I N T E N I E R E
U N I N G I N C R E A S E
E S S
D I E P R I S T I N E
K E K V E I
C L E A R I N G P A T E N T
O C O R A
P A R L A N C E B R O W S E
P A R K S E O S
E N T E R O N T H E T R O Y
R E U V Z L L
G E T T H E N E E D L E

PARKER DUOFOLD

A prize of a superb Parker Duofold International Fountain Pen, with an 18 carat gold nib and fully guaranteed for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

TIMES WEATHER

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0800 100 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Dorset, Hants & IOW	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wilt, Glouce, Avon, Some	705
Berks, Bucks, Oxon	706
Bedx, Herts & Essex	707
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs	708
West Mid & Sh. Glean & Gwent	709
Stroud, Herefords & Worcs	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincoln & Humberside	713
Shropshire & Powys	714
Yorkshire & Cleveland	715
NW England	716
W & S Yorks & Dees	717
NE England	718
Cumbria & Lake District	719
SW Scotland	720
SE Scotland	721
Edin & Fife, Lothian & Borders	722
E Central Scotland	723
Grampian & E Highlands	724
NW Scotland	725
Channel Islands, Orkney & Shetland	726
N Ireland	727

Weatherfax is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks	
C. London (within N & S Circs.)	731
M-ways/roads M4-M1	732
M-ways/roads M1-Dorsetford T	733
M-ways/roads Dorsetford T-M25	734
M-ways/roads M25-M4	735
M25 London Orbital only	736

National traffic and roadworks

National motorways	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
Midlands	740
East Anglia	741
North-west England	742
North-east England	743
Scotland	744
Northern Ireland	745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

The winners of last Saturday's competition are: C McDonald, St Leonard's Road West, St Anne's, Lancs; J C J Cavill, Newcastle Road, Stapleley, Nantwich, Cheshire; K Akers, Temple House, Ward Road, London; B Fenderson, White Ash, Glade, Caerleon, Newport, Gwent; V W Williams, Balfour Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent.

WEATHER

Eastern and southern parts of England and Wales will start bright or sunny, but showers over western regions, including Northern Ireland, will spread eastwards. Southwest England will be cloudier with patchy rain, becoming brighter with showers. Scotland will have a cold start with frost and wintry showers in the west, although the east will be mainly dry. It will be windy in the south and generally cold. Outlook: rain almost everywhere.

MIDDAY: 1=thunder; 2=drizzle; 3=fog; 4=sun; 5=clear; 6=cloud; 7=rain; 8=cloud; 9=rain; 10=cloud; 11=rain; 12=cloud; 13=rain; 14=cloud; 15=rain; 16=cloud; 17=rain; 18=cloud; 19=rain; 20=cloud; 21=rain; 22=cloud; 23=rain; 24=cloud; 25=rain; 26=cloud; 27=rain; 28=cloud; 29=rain; 30=cloud; 31=rain; 32=cloud; 33=rain; 34=cloud; 35=rain; 36=cloud; 37=rain; 38=cloud; 39=rain; 40=cloud; 41=rain; 42=cloud; 43=rain; 44=cloud; 45=rain; 46=cloud; 47=rain; 48=cloud; 49=rain; 50=cloud; 51=rain; 52=cloud; 53=rain; 54=cloud; 55=rain; 56=cloud; 57=rain; 58=cloud; 59=rain; 60=cloud; 61=rain; 62=cloud; 63=rain; 64=cloud; 65=rain; 66=cloud; 67=rain; 68=cloud; 69=rain; 70=cloud; 71=rain; 72=cloud; 73=rain; 74=cloud; 75=rain; 76=cloud; 77=rain; 78=cloud; 79=rain; 80=cloud; 81=rain; 82=cloud; 83=rain; 84=cloud; 85=rain; 86=cloud; 87=rain; 88=cloud; 89=rain; 90=cloud; 91=rain; 92=cloud; 93=rain; 94=cloud; 95=rain; 96=cloud; 97=rain; 98=cloud; 99=rain; 100=cloud; 101=rain; 102=cloud; 103=rain; 104=cloud; 105=rain; 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BUSINESS 19-30

Profile: Bringing in a new stamp of authority



SPORT 31-36

Martin Offiah's motto is try, try again



FOOTBALL 35

Graeme Souness and Liverpool's regeneration

WEEKEND SPORTING FIXTURES Page 31

THE TIMES 2

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 1992

Dan-Air deal leaves shares with no value

By MARTIN WALLER and PHILIP PANGALOS

SHAREHOLDERS in Davies & Newman, the Dan-Air holding company, have been left with nothing after the sale of most of the company's assets to British Airways, despite several cash injections into the ailing airline.

The shares remain suspended on the stock market and are effectively worthless. The deal marks a rare reversal for David James, the highly-rated company doctor who was brought in almost two years ago to effect a rescue.

Shareholders are not being given the chance to vote on the proposals, which rob them of any value whatever, because, Mr James says, there was a need to move quickly, and the deal represented the only alternative to receivership. He said

■ The City put £54m into Davies & Newman, but shareholders now have nothing

that by the time a poll could be arranged the company would have exceeded all borrowing limits and be insolvent. Special consent had therefore been granted by the Stock Exchange to waive a vote.

One City source said: "It's probably good news for the bankers, but there's no prospect that the shares have any value whatsoever."

A senior institutional fund manager whose company had a substantial exposure to Da-

vies & Newman also insisted on anonymity but said: "We are not very happy, but what can we do? These things unfortunately happen."

"We took the shares on recovery hopes and that did not happen. Frankly, there is not a lot I can tell you about this, but it has been a disaster. The bad news is there is virtually nothing left for shareholders."

Mr James said the BA deal would leave the company a shell, with no significant assets or liabilities. The last financial rescue in autumn 1991, when the City put in an additional £54 million of cash, was carried out on the basis of a modest economic upturn expected in 1992 which had not taken place. In the six months to end-June Davies & Newman lost £24 million at the operating level.

Without fresh capital, the normal seasonal cash drain would have sent debts higher by April next year. Mr James and the board had concluded that no fund-raising had been possible to let the company continue independently.

"Receivership would result not only in the loss of the shareholders' investment in the company but also in the loss of employment for all the group's staff and payment of only a small proportion of the sums due to the group's creditors," the company concluded.

"The board is also firmly of the view that there is no time available to seek any other solution."

BA has said it will not pay any more than a nominal sum for Dan-Air because of the likely cost of rationalisation already in hand. "This is why there will not be any benefit resulting for shareholders," Davies & Newman said.

A pension fund surplus of an unspecified size is being transferred across to BA along with the rest of the assets and will mainly be used to pay for early retirement for staff aged 50 and above.

BA takeover, page 1
Frenzied maydays, page 7



Doctor at sea: the success record of David James, brought in to rescue Dan-Air, has suffered a rare reversal

Insider dealing laws under fire

By NEIL BENNETT

PROPOSED new insider dealing laws have come under fire from senior City figures who have accused the government of wasting an opportunity to take effective action against financial crime.

The Home Office yesterday published the criminal justice bill, which expands the definition of insider dealing crimes and broadens the range of financial markets covered by the law. The bill implements the European Community's insider dealing directive.

For the first time, it will be an offence to trade in the gilts market on confidential government information. The law also covers the futures and options markets. In the past, insider dealing laws have only related to trading in the shares of specific companies. Trading in unregulated markets, such as foreign exchange and Eurobonds, is still exempt.

An insider will now be anyone who holds confiden-

tial information. Previously, insiders had to be connected with the company in whose shares they were dealing. The laws will also place a heavier burden of proof on defendants and make prosecutions easier.

But City regulators yesterday attacked the government's decision to attach the laws to the bill and not radically rethink insider dealing laws.

One senior figure called on the government to make insider dealing a civil as well as a criminal offence. He said the government had taken the easy option of merely implementing an EC directive.

When the government circulated the draft bill last summer, City firms became worried that their analysts would be guilty of insider dealing if they used unpublished trading information in their research. The Treasury is publishing guidance that will give precise definitions of insider information.

Firms give vote of no confidence

By MARTIN BARROW

GOVERNMENT economic policy received a damaging vote of no confidence from the business community when a survey of 1,000 firms, taken before the pit closure crisis, found nearly 70 per cent unimpressed by ministers' handling of the economy.

David Turnbull, managing secretary of the UK 200 group, which conducted the quarterly survey, said: "The vast majority of business people have no confidence in the government's ability to run the economy." The group comprises 200 chartered accountancy firms which canvassed business clients in the manufacturing, engineering, retailing and farming sectors.

Business confidence has hit an all-time low since the survey began 15 months ago with 56 per cent of respondents saying their trading position was getting worse. Just 13 per cent expect an improvement by the end of the year; 47 per cent anticipate a recovery in 1993.

There is some comfort on the employment front with almost three out of four businesses no longer planning job cuts. Lower interest rates headed the list of business priorities for recovery. The survey also found 76 per cent of respondents favoured the return to a floating exchange rate.

Mr Turnbull said: "A cut in base rates is what business wants most of all. Another cut would add significantly to confidence. There are also signs of well-managed manufacturing companies riding the storms, especially where solid achievement is evident in export markets."

Halifax urges housing action

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

RECOVERY in the housing market will be slow and muted without government intervention, Halifax Building Society, the largest mortgage lender, says in a review of the market over the past 20 years.

The report is published in *Viewpoint*, the society's occasional bulletin. David Gilchrist, general manager, and Gary Marsh, head of research, write: "The falls in nominal interest rates and rising incomes have ensured that houses are now affordable. But the combination of high real interest rates and depressed expectations about house prices continues to hold back demand."

The report, written before last Friday's base rate cut, says base rates of 6 or 7 per cent are

probably necessary for recovery "and these remain unlikely in the short term".

The authors believe that, given the damage to confidence in owner-occupied housing caused by the recession, more direct government measures might be necessary to stimulate recovery.

"We do not wish to see a repeat of the 1980s house price boom," they write. "Spalling house price inflation is of no help." The society suggests that increasing mortgage interest tax relief for first-time buyers, then phasing out the extra relief over several years, would help. It also suggests that phasing out the existing relief could pay for better-targeted subsidies. The Halifax says numbers of

repossessions, being managed currently, could rise sharply. General economic recovery is unlikely, it feels, without a recovery of confidence and turnover in the housing market. "Considered action now could avoid the need for crisis measures ... in 1993 or 1994."

The society says the housing market is probably at the bottom of the current downturn. While properties are more affordable, buyers are being frightened off by falling prices.

Last month, the Halifax house price index fell by 3.1 per cent — the worst monthly figure. The total for the year is likely to be 7.5 per cent.

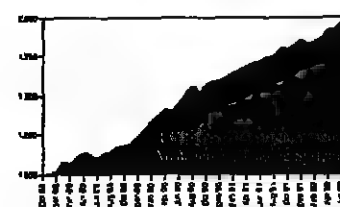
Negative equity, page 25

18% pa*

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Hanson fails to rule out RHM sales

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

HANSON is not ruling out the sale of businesses or brands from the Ranks Hovis McDougall stable if its £780 million offer for the food conglomerate is successful. Derek Bonham, the Hanson chief executive, made clear on the publication of the formal offer document.

The document says RHM shares have underperformed the stock market by 70 per cent over the past four years and attacks the declared defence strategy of breaking the

business up into three separate trading entities. "From a company of great potential and recognition, the split would create three companies of much less significance, with an uncertain future and uncertain values," the document claims.

RHM has suggested that Hanson's approach is to buy the company at less than its fair value and sell off large chunks to make a profit. Mr Bonham said that there were no plans for any disposals at

this stage. But he refused to rule out disposals if Hanson took control and examined the portfolio of brands held by RHM.

Late on Thursday, Hanson was required to distance itself from a reported statement that there were no plans to increase the offer, and that option is kept open by the offer document. The market believes a higher offer is imminent, and the RHM share price rose 2p to 249p yesterday, 29p ahead of the offer price.

Odds on a sleuth for the next Governor

By NEIL BENNETT
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE scathing criticisms of the Bank of England in Lord Justice Bingham's report on the Bank of Credit and Commerce International have rewritten the odds among the leading contenders in the race to become the next Governor of the Bank of England.

The breakdown in communication in the Bank and its failure to act on warning signals about the BCCI fraud have all but destroyed the chances of Eddie George, the deputy governor.

The Bank's decision to appoint Ian Watt, a senior accountant from KPMG Peat Marwick, as head of a new special investigations unit, and the arrival of Peter Peddie, a partner from Freshfields, to run the legal unit, shows that a new broom is sweeping through. While Norman Lamont, the Chan-



cellor, stood by Robin Leigh-Pemberton, the Governor, and his staff in the Commons yesterday, the coming year could see considerable changes in the top echelons of the Bank and its court of directors. The City feels the

likeliest new broom is now Sir David Walker, ex-chairman of the Securities and Investments Board and now deputy chairman of Lloyds Bank. During his four years at the SIB, he transformed the organisation into an effective

US dollar 1.6145 (-0.0097)
German mark 2.4702 (+0.0128)
Exchange index 80.5 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET
FT 30 share 1981.7 (+11.9)
FT-SE 100 2669.7 (+11.6)
New York Dow Jones 3198.72 (-2.16)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 1717.65 (+104.61)

INTEREST RATES
London: Bank Base: 8%
3-month Interbank: 8 1/8-8 1/2
3-month eligible bills: 7 1/4-7 1/2
US: Prime Rate: 8%
Federal Funds: 2 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills: 2.92-2.90%
30-year bonds: 95 1/4-95 1/2

CURRENCIES
London: New York
£: \$1.6150
DM: £1.3505
Sfr: £1.3855
FF: £1.1940
Yen: £121.98
Index: 80.5
ECU: £0.79548
£: ECU 1.26444
£: SFR 1.140970
London Forex market close

GOLD
London Fixing:
AM \$343.80 PM \$342.50
Close \$342.80-\$343.00
£120.00-213.00
New York:
Comex \$ 343.65-344.05*

NORTH SEA OIL
Brent (Nov) \$20.05/bbl (\$20.00)

RETAIL PRICES
RPI: 133.4 September (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

ICI sails into spell of stormy weather

THE City has just given Britain's industrial barometer a gentle tap and has watched in horror as the needle dropped back to somewhere between strong winds and gales.

Britain's industrial barometer is, of course, ICI, the chemicals group, which is expected to report a sharp fall in trade for the third quarter of the year on October 29.

As the chart shows, ICI has behaved as the perfect market barometer recently until analysts began to downgrade forecasts. Since then, ICI has underperformed badly. Profits for the third quarter are expected to have just over £100 million, leaving profits for the first nine months of the year down 25 per cent to £525 million.

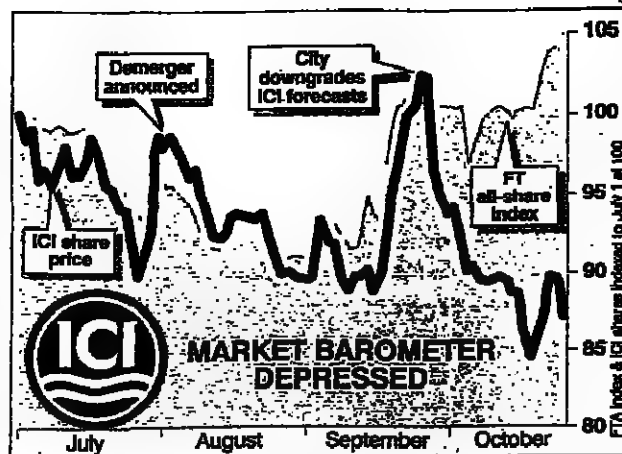
The faint signs of upturn seen in May and June seem to have disappeared, leaving July and August depressed and September no better. But the City is already looking ahead to what the depression in the chemicals industry means for ICI's plans to demerge its biological busi-

nesses at the start of next year.

Full-year profits before tax in 1992 are expected to be just above £600 million, against £843 million in 1991. But it is the forecast for 1993 that commands most interest. At £775 million or £800 million it sounds reasonable.

But the City is also looking at forecasts for the proposed ICI Bio and the rump of ICI Smith New Court, the stockbroker, says this splits into £500 million for ICI Bio and £275 million or so for ICI. It is thought ICI will have to split the existing dividend more or less in half between the two new companies.

However, SNC reckons the earnings from ICI chemicals will come out at just 17p a share because of a rising tax charge. It is thought that ICI chemicals will have to write off some unrelieved ACT against its profit-and-loss account unless it is able to create a deferred tax provision of some sort. If the 55p dividend for the whole of ICI is split equally it should be 27.5p for ICI chemicals, leav-



ing an uncovered dividend. Failing the creation of a deferred tax provision to write off its unrelieved ACT, ICI may be in no position to proceed with its demerger next February, concludes SNC. Just as well ICI said its demerger was subject to market conditions when revealing it earlier this year.

But as *The Times* pointed out shortly after the demerger, even ICI's own brokers saw little or no

immediate financial advantage for shareholders. ICI said it was an industrially driven manoeuvre. It would be a pity if the demerger did not proceed because a separate listing would open takeover opportunities for the pharmaceuticals business.

If the company stays as one for the whole of 1993, the City expects earnings of 63.5p, based on a tax charge of 40 per cent pushed up by unrelieved ACT of an estimated

£100 million. This barely covers a maintained dividend of 55p. Heavy weather indeed.

Dorling Kindersley

DORLING Kindersley Holdings, going public via a placing and offer of 19.15 million new shares, found that the more City institutions it spoke to, the more the group was liked.

DK, the publisher of illustrated reference books founded in 1974, has taken full advantage of this and pitched the issue price at the top of the range at 165p a share. This puts the shares on a fully diluted historic price earnings ratio of 18.1 times. DK has a dividend record behind it and the notional yield, had 3p a share not been paid last year, is 2.4 per cent.

DK has also recognised the investment appetite for its shares by increasing from 25 per cent to 36.6 per cent the slice of new shares available to the public (by applying to the intermediaries). Publishing specialised non-

fiction books has served DK well, and pre-tax profits have surged from £295,000, in the year to end-June 1988, to £7.5 million in 1992. Turnover in the same period jumped from £10.8 million to £70.9 million, with more to come.

DK sells in more than 80 countries and 37 languages. Britain, where the 1991 book market was worth £1.6 billion, and America, with a market of \$16 billion, account for 62 per cent of sales.

Microsoft, the computer software company, will remain a significant minority shareholder after its 26 per cent interest is diluted to 19.6 per cent. There are also close trading links with Reader's Digest. Kindersley family interests will hold 44.9 per cent on flotation. The offer will raise £23.4 million net, to be used to repay UK bank borrowings and to fund expansion. Pre-tax profits of £10.5 million seem likely this financial year, to put the shares on 15.4 times prospective earnings. That is not cheap, but still a premium is likely on listing this Friday.

Trippier takes post at Tepnel

SIR David Trippier, the former environment minister, has been appointed deputy chairman of Tepnel Diagnostics, a biotechnology company floated on the stock market last month.

Sir David, who lost his seat in April's general election, succeeds Harold Morley, who relinquishes the dual role to concentrate on his duties as chief executive.

Alec Craig, a partner with Halliwell Landau, the Manchester solicitors, has been appointed a non-executive director of Tepnel. Sir David was appointed consultant to Halliwell Landau three months ago.

Since losing his seat, Sir David has accepted three non-executive directorships.

Crown shares suspended during loan discussions

By COLIN CAMPBELL

CROWN Communications Group, the commercial radio concern that owns London Broadcasting Company, yesterday asked for a temporary suspension of its shares. Talks to resolve its strained financial position became substantive.

The group, chaired by Christopher Chataway, said it was holding talks with its bankers and other parties regarding a refinancing, but indicated that these may take a few days. Crown shares last traded at 6p.

In September 1991, the group raised £4.5 million via a three-for-eight rights issue at 45p a share as part of a three-pronged strategy to put its finances on a firmer footing.

Other action to redress a heavily overborrowed position included the sale of non-core radio interests and attempts to sell RFM, the loss-making French radio network. Earlier this year, Crown said it had reached a conditional agreement to sell RFM to a consortium led by NRJ, a rival radio, but the deal was opposed by the French authorities. Crown has subsequently put together another consortium. Finalisation of this part of Crown's reorganisation plan is expected soon.

In the six months to end-March, Crown reported that pre-tax losses had deepened to £5.58 million (£4.68 million). In the year ended September



Money talks: Christopher Chataway, chairman of Crown, is to meet bankers

30, 1991, the group's pre-tax losses totalled £6.79 million. Borrowings were last disclosed at £15 million, equivalent to gearing of almost 200 per cent. The group employs 423 people, of whom 40 are in France.

The price realised for the earlier sale of non-core radio

business was not disclosed, nor has Crown indicated the price it expects for RFM.

Earlier this month, a French commercial court appointed a 'provisional director' to supervise the setting up of a new board of RFM. Crown had not known about the court hearing, and Mr Chataway

remarked at the time that the incident was 'a storm in a teacup at a minor subsidiary'.

The latest round of financial talks involves potential new outside investors, and because such talks have reached a 'specific' stage, suspension of the shares was requested at 9.43 am yesterday.

Usborne bounces back into the black

By OUR CITY STAFF

USBORNE, with activities ranging from pig farming to motor products, is back in the black after last year's decision to quit property.

The company made pre-tax profits of £833,000 (£3.75 million loss) in the six months to June 30 on turnover 11.6 per cent ahead at £101 million. The comparative figures were depressed by £4.5 million of exceptional charges relating to losses on a development joint venture and on discontinued businesses. Usborne has now sold all its residential properties, although commercial letting in London remains 'extremely difficult'.

Profits from grain merchandising rose 30.2 per cent to £755,000, on turnover up 10 per cent to £86.6 million while pig production profits jumped to £430,000 (£191,000), on turnover up 22 per cent to £12.7 million.

Noel Stephens, finance director, is cautiously optimistic, although he admits that trading conditions are still tough. 'Agriculture has its own recession apart from what is happening elsewhere, but we are confident we can continue to make money'.

Earnings stood at 0.92p a share, against a deficit of 4.9p last time. The interim dividend is raised to 0.2p (0.1p). The shares rose 3p to 18p.

Jarvis passes payout after half-time loss

THE deep recession that is gripping the construction industry took its toll on Jarvis, as the construction and property group passed its interim dividend after sliding into the red at the halfway stage.

Jarvis suffered a pre-tax loss of £1.72 million in the six months to end-June, compared with a profit of £71,000 last time, as turnover declined from £61 million to £48 million. Harvey Bard, the chairman, said: 'The sectors in which the group operates are experiencing considerably worse trading conditions than my pessimistic predictions of earlier this year'.

There is a loss of 9.5p a share, compared with earnings of 0.3p a share last time. There is no dividend, against an interim payout of 0.25p last time. Jarvis shares eased 1p to 28p.

Abbey to cut savers' rate

ABBEY National is to cut its savings rates from October 27, it announced yesterday. The reductions of up to 1.05 per cent will take place more than a month before Abbey National cuts its mortgage rate on December 1. It had already cut the savers' rates an average of 0.9 per cent at the beginning of this month. The rate on tax exempt special savings accounts will fall from 9.2 per cent to 8.15 per cent. The current account is down from 1.13 per cent net to 0.75 per cent net and the instant saver will pay 5.18 per cent net on £25,000, down 0.6 per cent.

Greenbank settles claim

WALKER Greenbank, the wallcoverings group, has settled a claim for £4.6 million against Arthur Young, its former auditor, and Alan and William Carr, the owners of Allair, a shop fitting company acquired in 1987. As part of the cash settlement of £3.7 million, 1.6 million shares in Walker Greenbank issued to the Carrs in 1988 will be placed in the market with the proceeds reinvested in Walker Greenbank. The £900,000 balance represents the surrender by the Carrs of their loans to Walker Greenbank.

Brewery deal near

A DEAL involving the transfer of management control of The Whitbread Brewery Company to an unnamed overseas brewer in return for an injection of new capital is expected to be completed next week. Details of progress on the talks were released with delayed results for the 14 months to November 30 last year showing a pre-tax loss of £1.4 million, compared with losses of £578,380 for the previous 12 months. Losses per share rose to 15.93p from 12.23p and there is again no dividend.

Torday jobs in jeopardy

MORE than 300 jobs hang in the balance after Torday and Carlisle announced it was to streamline activities at loss-making Oldham Signs, which maintains the neon signs in London's Piccadilly. Oldham has been withdrawn from sale after failing to agree a deal despite interest from several bidders. Torday bought Oldham for £9 million in 1988. The business lost £970,000 in the first half of this year. Offers received for Arghis Signs and Oldham Lighting, which are subsidiaries of Oldham Signs, will still be considered.

Alvis to cut workforce

UP TO 230 jobs are to go at Alvis Industries in Coventry after a downturn in orders for the company's defence-related business, which manufactures armoured vehicles and personnel carriers. In the late 1980s, Alvis regularly received about £20 million worth of orders each year from the government for spare parts for a whole range of military vehicles. Last year, that fell to only £2 million. The redundancy shake-up and consequent reorganisation is expected to be completed early next year and will cost up to £5 million.

Scapa in purchase talks

SCAPA Group, the manufacturer of specialist products for the printing and paper industry, is in discussions with the managers of P. Oberdorfer, a leading German manufacturer of forming fabrics for the paper industry. Scapa said the talks of forming fabrics for the paper industry. Scapa said the talks with Oberdorfer's joint administrators receivers may lead to the acquisition of the business and assets of its German, Austrian and American operations. Scapa said a further announcement would be made as soon as possible after negotiations were concluded.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Still sliding

Unemployment rises... borrowing rises... the trade gap widens... It will take well into next year before the downward momentum in output is reversed. For next year as a whole a rise in GDP of under 1% is now in prospect...

The London Business School economic forecast - exclusively in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

This notice is issued in compliance with the requirements of the London Stock Exchange. It does not constitute an offer or invitation to any person to subscribe for or to purchase any shares. Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for the Ordinary Shares, issued and to be issued, to be admitted to the Official List. It is expected that such admission will become effective and that dealings will commence on Friday 30 October 1992.



DORLING KINDERSLEY HOLDINGS plc

(Incorporated and registered in England under the Companies Act 1985 with registered number 2112073)

Dorling Kindersley is an innovative publisher with an international business approach. It creates books for a world market. Over 18 years, Dorling Kindersley has built up a reputation as a leading creator of high quality illustrated reference books. Dorling Kindersley's books currently sell in more than 80 countries and in 37 languages.

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by BARCLAYS de ZOE WEDD LIMITED

of 19,151,715 Ordinary Shares at 165p per share payable in full on application

SHARE CAPITAL FOLLOWING THE OFFER

Amount authorised	Amount issued and fully paid	Number of shares authorised	Number of shares issued and fully paid
£4,500,000	£3,081,005.75	90,000,000	61,626,115

Arrangements have been made by Barclays de Zoete Wedd Limited and Cazenove & Co. (the sponsoring member firm) for the above 19,151,715 Ordinary Shares to be placed with clients of Cazenove & Co. Of these, 12,151,715 Ordinary Shares are being placed with 7,000,000 Ordinary Shares are being placed subject to clawback by Intermediaries and Preferential Applicants.

Members of the public or institutions wishing to apply for shares in the Intermediaries Offer must do so through Intermediaries, who must be member firms of the London Stock Exchange. The application list for the Intermediaries Offer will be closed at 10.00 am on Wednesday 28 October 1992 (or such later time as BZW may decide). Intermediaries may obtain Intermediaries' Application Forms only from Cazenove & Co. at the address below.

Copies of the Prospectus (which comprises listing particulars relating to the Company) may be obtained during normal business hours on any weekday (Saturdays excepted) up to and including 6 November 1992 from:

Barclays de Zoete Wedd Limited Ebbw Vale House 2 Swan Lane London EC4	Cazenove & Co. 12 Tokenhouse Yard London EC2	Dorling Kindersley Holdings plc 9 Henrietta Street Covent Garden London WC2
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and during normal business hours on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 October 1992, for collection only, from a Company Announcements Office, London Stock Exchange Tower, Capel Court entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London EC2. The Prospectus is also included in the Company Fiche Service available from Exel Financial Limited, 37-45 Paul Street, London EC2.

24 October 1992

INTERMEDIARIES OFFER CLOSING WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER

Asean agrees free trade area

FROM ABBY TAN IN MANILA

THE economic ministers of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) yesterday agreed to implement a free trade area on January 1 and to accelerate tariff cutting of key product sectors from 15 years to 10 years.

The ministers agreed at the end of a two-day meeting to a ten-year time frame for the reduction of tariffs of over 20 per cent, and to seven years for products with a tariff of less

than 20 per cent. The Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) will achieve the ultimate level of less than 5 per cent tariff on all products by the year 2008, when the scheme is fully operational. Implementation begins on January 1.

Asean has identified 15 product sectors comprising 4,000 items for tariff cutting. These include chemicals, pharmaceuticals, plastics, ceramics and vegetable oils.

The ministers expressed concern over the breakdown of the Uruguay round discussions in Brussels between the European Community and the United States. Rafidah Aziz, the Malaysian minister for international trade, said the failure of the talks, held under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, made it imperative that small trading nations find their own solutions.

THE Bank of England took advantage of this week's demand for government securities to embark on another fundraising exercise.

It is issuing £1 billion of new stock Treasury 7½ per cent 1998. The new stock will be used to replace Treasury

1992-96, which is being called back in. The redemption date is January 28, the same date as the first call on the new stock.

Another firm performance by the pound and speculation about a cut in interest rates saw prices marked higher.

Most attention was focused on the longer end where gains of £1 were common. Dealers say the short end is already discounting interest rates of 7 per cent. On the futures market, the long gilt rose £1 to £100 1/2 as 38,000 contracts were completed.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

99 1/2	99 1/2	Treasury 1993	100 1/2	6.21	6.32
100 1/2	100 1/2	Treasury 1994	100 1/2	6.22	6.33
101 1/2	101 1/2	Treasury 1995	101 1/2	6.23	6.34
102 1/2	102 1/2	Treasury 1996	102 1/2	6.24	6.35
103 1/2	103 1/2	Treasury 1997	103 1/2	6.25	6.36
104 1/2	104 1/2	Treasury 1998	104 1/2	6.26	6.37
105 1/2	105 1/2	Treasury 1999	105 1/2	6.27	6.38
106 1/2	106 1/2	Treasury 2000	106 1/2	6.28	6.39
107 1/2	107 1/2	Treasury 2001	107 1/2	6.29	6.40
108 1/2	108 1/2	Treasury 2002	108 1/2	6.30	6.41
109 1/2	109 1/2	Treasury 2003	109 1/2	6.31	6.42
110 1/2	110 1/2	Treasury 2004	110 1/2	6.32	6.43
111 1/2	111 1/2	Treasury 2005	111 1/2	6.33	6.44
112 1/2	112 1/2	Treasury 2006	112 1/2	6.34	6.45
113 1/2	113 1/2	Treasury 2007	113 1/2	6.35	6.46
114 1/2	114 1/2	Treasury 2008	114 1/2	6.36	6.47
115 1/2	115 1/2	Treasury 2009	115 1/2	6.37	6.48
116 1/2	116 1/2	Treasury 2010	116 1/2	6.38	6.49
117 1/2	117 1/2	Treasury 2011	117 1/2	6.39	6.50
118 1/2	118 1/2	Treasury 2012	118 1/2	6.40	6.51
119 1/2	119 1/2	Treasury 2013	119 1/2	6.41	6.52
120 1/2	120 1/2	Treasury 2014	120 1/2	6.42	6.53
121 1/2	121 1/2	Treasury 2015	121 1/2	6.43	6.54
122 1/2	122 1/2	Treasury 2016	122 1/2	6.44	6.55
123 1/2	123 1/2	Treasury 2017	123 1/2	6.45	6.56
124 1/2	124 1/2	Treasury 2018	124 1/2	6.46	6.57
125 1/2	125 1/2	Treasury 2019	125 1/2	6.47	6.58
126 1/2	126 1/2	Treasury 2020	126 1/2	6.48	6.59
127 1/2	127 1/2	Treasury 2021	127 1/2	6.49	6.60
128 1/2	128 1/2	Treasury 2022	128 1/2	6.50	6.61
129 1/2	129 1/2	Treasury 2023	129 1/2	6.51	6.62
130 1/2	130 1/2	Treasury 2024	130 1/2	6.52	6.63
131 1/2	131 1/2	Treasury 2025	131 1/2	6.53	6.64
132 1/2	132 1/2	Treasury 2026	132 1/2	6.54	6.65
133 1/2	133 1/2	Treasury 2027	133 1/2	6.55	6.66
134 1/2	134 1/2	Treasury 2028	134 1/2	6.56	6.67
135 1/2	135 1/2	Treasury 2029	135 1/2	6.57	6.68
136 1/2	136 1/2	Treasury 2030	136 1/2	6.58	6.69
137 1/2	137 1/2	Treasury 2031	137 1/2	6.59	6.70
138 1/2	138 1/2	Treasury 2032	138 1/2	6.60	6.71
139 1/2	139 1/2	Treasury 2033	139 1/2	6.61	6.72
140 1/2	140 1/2	Treasury 2034	140 1/2	6.62	6.73
141 1/2	141 1/2	Treasury 2035	141 1/2	6.63	6.74
142 1/2	142 1/2	Treasury 2036	142 1/2	6.64	6.75
143 1/2	143 1/2	Treasury 2037	143 1/2	6.65	6.76
144 1/2	144 1/2	Treasury 2038	144 1/2	6.66	6.77
145 1/2	145 1/2	Treasury 2039	145 1/2	6.67	6.78
146 1/2	146 1/2	Treasury 2040	146 1/2	6.68	6.79
147 1/2	147 1/2	Treasury 2041	147 1/2	6.69	6.80
148 1/2	148 1/2	Treasury 2042	148 1/2	6.70	6.81
149 1/2	149 1/2	Treasury 2043	149 1/2	6.71	6.82
150 1/2	150 1/2	Treasury 2044	150 1/2	6.72	6.83
151 1/2	151 1/2	Treasury 2045	151 1/2	6.73	6.84
152 1/2	152 1/2	Treasury 2046	152 1/2	6.74	6.85
153 1/2	153 1/2	Treasury 2047	153 1/2	6.75	6.86
154 1/2	154 1/2	Treasury 2048	154 1/2	6.76	6.87
155 1/2	155 1/2	Treasury 2049	155 1/2	6.77	6.88
156 1/2	156 1/2	Treasury 2050	156 1/2	6.78	6.89
157 1/2	157 1/2	Treasury 2051	157 1/2	6.79	6.90
158 1/2	158 1/2	Treasury 2052	158 1/2	6.80	6.91
159 1/2	159 1/2	Treasury 2053	159 1/2	6.81	6.92
160 1/2	160 1/2	Treasury 2054	160 1/2	6.82	6.93
161 1/2	161 1/2	Treasury 2055	161 1/2	6.83	6.94
162 1/2	162 1/2	Treasury 2056	162 1/2	6.84	6.95
163 1/2	163 1/2	Treasury 2057	163 1/2	6.85	6.96
164 1/2	164 1/2	Treasury 2058	164 1/2	6.86	6.97
165 1/2	165 1/2	Treasury 2059	165 1/2	6.87	6.98
166 1/2	166 1/2	Treasury 2060	166 1/2	6.88	6.99
167 1/2	167 1/2	Treasury 2061	167 1/2	6.89	7.00
168 1/2	168 1/2	Treasury 2062	168 1/2	6.90	7.01
169 1/2	169 1/2	Treasury 2063	169 1/2	6.91	7.02
170 1/2	170 1/2	Treasury 2064	170 1/2	6.92	7.03
171 1/2	171 1/2	Treasury 2065	171 1/2	6.93	7.04
172 1/2	172 1/2	Treasury 2066	172 1/2	6.94	7.05
173 1/2	173 1/2	Treasury 2067	173 1/2	6.95	7.06
174 1/2	174 1/2	Treasury 2068	174 1/2	6.96	7.07
175 1/2	175 1/2	Treasury 2069	175 1/2	6.97	7.08
176 1/2	176 1/2	Treasury 2070	176 1/2	6.98	7.09
177 1/2	177 1/2	Treasury 2071	177 1/2	6.99	7.10
178 1/2	178 1/2	Treasury 2072	178 1/2	7.00	7.11
179 1/2	179 1/2	Treasury 2073	179 1/2	7.01	7.12
180 1/2	180 1/2	Treasury 2074	180 1/2	7.02	7.13
181 1/2	181 1/2	Treasury 2075	181 1/2	7.03	7.14
182 1/2	182 1/2	Treasury 2076	182 1/2	7.04	7.15
183 1/2	183 1/2	Treasury 2077	183 1/2	7.05	7.16
184 1/2	184 1/2	Treasury 2078	184 1/2	7.06	7.17
185 1/2	185 1/2	Treasury 2079	185 1/2	7.07	7.18
186 1/2	186 1/2	Treasury 2080	186 1/2	7.08	7.19
187 1/2	187 1/2	Treasury 2081	187 1/2	7.09	7.20
188 1/2	188 1/2	Treasury 2082	188 1/2	7.10	7.21
189 1/2	189 1/2	Treasury 2083	189 1/2	7.11	7.22
190 1/2	190 1/2	Treasury 2084	190 1/2	7.12	7.23
191 1/2	191 1/2	Treasury 2085	191 1/2	7.13	7.24
192 1/2	192 1/2	Treasury 2086	192 1/2	7.14	7.25
193 1/2	193 1/2	Treasury 2087	193 1/2	7.15	7.26
194 1/2	194 1/2	Treasury 2088	194 1/2	7.16	7.27
195 1/2	195 1/2	Treasury 2089	195 1/2	7.17	7.28
196 1/2	196 1/2	Treasury 2090	196 1/2	7.18	7.29
197 1/2	197 1/2	Treasury 2091	197 1/2	7.19	7.30
198 1/2	198 1/2	Treasury 2092	198 1/2	7.20	7.31
199 1/2	199 1/2	Treasury 2093	199 1/2	7.21	7.32
200 1/2	200 1/2	Treasury 2094	200 1/2	7.22	7.33
201 1/2	201 1/2	Treasury 2095	201 1/2	7.23	7.34
202 1/2	202 1/2	Treasury 2096	202 1/2	7.24	7.35
203 1/2	203 1/2	Treasury 2097	203 1/2	7.25	7.36
204 1/2	204 1/2	Treasury 2098	204 1/2	7.26	7.37
205 1/2	205 1/2	Treasury 2099	205 1/2	7.27	7.38
206 1/2	206 1/2	Treasury 2100	206 1/2	7.28	7.39
207 1/2	207 1/2	Treasury 2101	207 1/2	7.29	7.40
208 1/2	208 1/2	Treasury 2102	208 1/2	7.30	7.41
209 1/2	209 1/2	Treasury 2103	209 1/2	7.31	7.42
210 1/2	210 1/2	Treasury 2104	210 1/2	7.32	7.43
211 1/2	211 1/2	Treasury 2105	211 1/2	7.33	7.44
212 1/2	212 1/2	Treasury 2106	212 1/2	7.34	7.45
213 1/2	213 1/2	Treasury 2107	213 1/2	7.35	7.46
214 1/2	214 1/2	Treasury 2108	214 1/2	7.36	7.47
215 1/2	215 1/2	Treasury 2109	215 1/2	7.37	7.48
216 1/2	216 1/2	Treasury 2110	216 1/2	7.38	7.49
217 1/2	217 1/2	Treasury 2111	217 1/2	7.39	7.50
218 1/2	218 1/2	Treasury 2112	218 1/2	7.40	7.51
219 1/2	219 1/2	Treasury 2113	219 1/2	7.41	7.52
220 1/2	220 1/2	Treasury 2114	220 1/2	7.42	7.53
221 1/2	221 1/2	Treasury 2115	221 1/2	7.43	7.54
222 1/2	222 1/2	Treasury 2116	222 1/2	7.44	7.55
223 1/2	223 1/2	Treasury 2117	223 1/2	7.45	7.56
224 1/2	224 1/2	Treasury 2118	224 1/2	7.46	7.57
225 1/2	225 1/2	Treasury 2119	225 1/2	7.47	7.58
226 1/2	226 1/2	Treasury 2120	226 1/2	7.48	7.59
227 1/2	227 1/2	Treasury 2121	227 1/2	7.49	7.60
228 1/2	228 1/2	Treasury 2122	228 1/2	7.50	7.61
229 1/2	229 1/2	Treasury 2123	229 1/2	7.51	7.62
230 1/2	230 1/2	Treasury 2124	230 1/2	7.52	7.63
231 1/2	231 1/2	Treasury 2125	231 1/2	7.53	7.64
232 1/2	232 1/2	Treasury 2126	232 1/2	7.54	7.65
233 1/2	233 1/2	Treasury 2127	233 1/2	7.55	7.66
234 1/2	234 1/2	Treasury 2128	234 1/2	7.56	7.67
235 1/2	235 1/2	Treasury 2129	235 1/2	7.57	7.68
236 1/2	236 1/2	Treasury 2130	236 1/2	7.58	7.69
237 1/2	237 1/2	Treasury 2131	237 1/2	7.59	7.70
238 1/2	238 1/2	Treasury 2132	238 1/2	7.60	7.71
239 1/2	239 1/2	Treasury 2133	239 1/2	7.61	7.72
240 1/2	240 1/2	Treasury 2134	240 1/2	7.62	7.73
241 1/2	241 1/2	Treasury 2135	241 1/2	7.63	7.74
242 1/2	242 1/2	Treasury 2136	242 1/2	7.64	7.75
243 1/2	243 1/2	Treasury 2137	243 1/2	7.65	7.76
244 1/2	244 1/2	Treasury 2138	244 1/2	7.66	7.77
245 1/2	245 1/2	Treasury 2139	245 1/2	7.67	7.78
246 1/2	246 1/2	Treasury 2140	246 1/2	7.68	7.79
247 1/2	247 1/2	Treasury 2141	247 1/2	7.69	7.80
248 1/2	248 1/2	Treasury 2142	248 1/2	7.70	7.81
249 1/2	249 1/2	Treasury 2143	249 1/2	7.71	7.82
250 1/2	250 1/2	Treasury 2144	250 1/2	7.72	7.83
251 1/2	251 1/2	Treasury 2145	251 1/2	7.73	7.84
252 1/2	252 1/2	Treasury 2146	252 1/2	7.74	7.85
253 1/2	253 1/2	Treasury 2147	253 1/2	7.75	7.86
254 1/2	254 1/2	Treasury 2148	254 1/2	7.76	7.87
255 1/2	255 1/2	Treasury 2149	255 1/2	7.77	7.88
256 1/2	256 1/2	Treasury 2150	256 1/2	7.78	7.89
257 1/2	257 1/2	Treasury 2151	257 1/2	7.79	7.90
258 1/2	258 1/2	Treasury 2152	258 1/2	7.80	7.91
259 1/2	259 1/2	Treasury 2153	259 1/2	7.81	7.92
260 1/2	260 1/2	Treasury 2154	260 1/2	7.82	7.93
261 1/2	261 1/2	Treasury 2155	261 1/2	7.83	7.94
262 1/2	262 1/2	Treasury 2156	262 1/2	7.84	7.95
263 1/2	263 1/2	Treasury 2157	263 1/2	7.85	7.96
264 1/2	264 1/2	Treasury 2158	264 1/2	7.86	7.97
265 1/2	265 1/2	Treasury 2159	265 1/2	7.87	7.98
266 1/2	266 1/2	Treasury 2160	266 1/2	7.88	7.99
267 1/2	267 1/2	Treasury 2161	267 1/2	7.89	8.00
268 1/2	268 1/2	Treasury 2162	268 1/2	7.90	8.01
269 1/2	269 1/2	Treasury 2163	269 1/2	7.91	8.02
270 1/2	270 1/2	Treasury 2164	270 1/2	7.92	8.03
271 1/2	271 1/2	Treasury 2165	271 1/2	7.93	8.04
272 1/2	272 1/2	Treasury 2166	272 1/2	7.94	8.05
273 1/2	273 1/2	Treasury 2167	273 1/2	7.95	8.06
274 1/2	274 1/2	Treasury 2168	274 1/2	7.96	8.07
275 1/2	275 1/2	Treasury 2169	275 1/2	7.97	8.0

BUSINESS PROFILE: Bill Cockburn

Unknown insider who always aims to deliver

Carol Leonard discovers the new chief executive of the Post Office would enjoy steering it into the private sector

The Post Office, that huge, monolithic organisation, with an annual turnover of £5.5 billion and 220,000 employees, has a new boss. Two days ago, Bill Cockburn took over from Sir Bryan Nicholson as its chief executive.

Nicholson, who came to the Post Office in 1979 after a career that had spanned the chairmanships of both Rank Xerox (UK) and the Manpower Services Commission, was an instantly recognisable name. Bill Cockburn is not. Cockburn has come up through the Post Office ranks. At an age when Nicholson was still debating politics as an undergraduate at Oriel College, Oxford, Cockburn was tentatively setting out on what was to prove to be a 31-year career — thus far — with one organisation. "I could have gone to university," says Cockburn. "I mean, I had the necessary qualifications. But realistically and economically I needed to work. My parents had supported me all the way through school and I was the eldest of eight." University or not, Cockburn, 49, has, nevertheless, become the first internal candidate to land the top Post Office job. What is more, he is taking over during the most critical period in its history since it and British Telecom were separated from the GPO 11 years ago.

The government's Post Office review, due to be published before Christmas, will determine whether it is to become the next subject for privatisation. Cockburn gives it a 50-50 chance. If it gets the go-ahead, it will, he reckons, inject £1.5 to £2 billion into the public purse. "[Michael] Heseltine [the trade secretary] has said he has an open mind. There are other options. Even Margaret Thatcher, that great supporter of privatisation, once said that the Royal Mail would not be privatised because it was different. We have the status of a nationalised industry, but we are a public service organisation. We are owned by the taxpayer."

While accepting, therefore, that privatisation is not a foregone

conclusion, Cockburn admits that he would enjoy steering the organisation into the private sector. After all, most of the difficult preparatory work has been done. The Post Office has been consistently profitable for 16 years, does not receive a penny in government subsidy and, Cockburn claims, "has a return on capital employed that most private sector companies would give their eye teeth for." It made profits of £260 million in the year to end-March 1992, and, despite its status, Cockburn denies that it makes too much money.

"The post today is the same price, in real terms, that it was in 1976. The service is the best in Europe and that is measured independently." He says that 91.5 per cent of first class mail is now delivered the next day, compared with 74 per cent in 1988. He is quick to add, however, that this state of affairs has not been brought about with-

out difficulty.

"We have had our period of pain. The lowest point in terms of service was at the end of the 1970s. Industrial relations were very poor, the management was not very smart and government interference with our pricing policy ruined the market. You can build up a reputation over a long period of time, you can lose it again very quickly, and it can then take a whole decade to regain it."

"This is a massive omnipresent organisation with its own culture. We have been changing that culture very slowly, but it is like a prism with many faces. If you look through one face you can see this huge national service. The postman with his red van, the sub-office which is also the village shop. That is an image which is politically very sensitive and is precious and must be protected. If you look through another face of the prism you will see a structure with all the jargon and pressures of any big, profitable business." Cockburn has the jargon and business knowledge to match the senior managers of any other large, profitable, blue chip company. Given his life-long career within the Post Office you could be



Seat of power: Bill Cockburn, who has come up through the Post Office ranks over a 31-year career

forgiven if you had expected him to be grey, stiff, and old fashioned, a product of a civil service-type entity. As soon as you open his office door, however, you realise that you are going to be in for a surprise. He leaps forward enthusiastically, almost lunging at the door, and greets you warmly. He is 5ft 7ins tall and stands closer than most, infusing that unwritten area of personal space. He settles into a large leather arm chair, rests his feet on a coffee table, and moves them periodically, fidgeting. He declines an offer of tea and asks for a Diet Coke. Cockburn, the son of a hospital porter, is neither

nervous, shy nor daunted by his new job. "I was appointed to the board when I was 38 years old and I was managing director of Royal Mail which is the biggest job with the most people." He further supports his credentials by pointing out that he and Iain Vallance, now chairman of British Telecom, joined the postal service at the same time and although the similarities and there — "He went to Oxford, is more cerebral and aloof, I'm less obviously cerebral, more up front" — they level pegged each other when it came to promotions. "Our careers have mirrored each other ever since. I was PA to the

chairman of the corporation from 1971-73, Sir William Ryland, and Iain Vallance took over from me. He leapt to be chairman of BT in 1987 and now I have caught up with him." Cockburn's competitive nature begins to be revealed. He is charming, personable, but likes to win. "Yes, he does hate to lose," says Terry Coughlan, a friend who lives near Cockburn's home in Farnborough, Hampshire. "He is extremely stubborn, very, very determined and, on holiday, if he plays Monopoly with his daughters [Rachel, 18, Becky, 15], he would never let them win. He can be very charming, but he always manages

to get his own way. And he has always been very ambitious. He works twice as many hours as other people, he always has done. Even if we go away together for a few days to play golf, he is always ringing his office. He has his papers delivered to him, like a Cabinet minister."

That drive for achievement is, however, more for his personal satisfaction than public consumption. He is not an ostentatious man. Born in Edinburgh, into a Catholic family, he was raised in a high-rise flat and then a four-bedroom council house. "But we were always very comfortable and we made our own fun," he says. He passed his 11-plus, and went to Holy Cross Academy, a Catholic grammar school. "I was not very studious. Looking back, I suppose studying was always difficult at home because of the noise and distractions."

But he admits that those early experiences helped to form his character. "I do have a lot of determination and I think that did take root in those early days. It was the only way you could get on. My aspirations were not high, but I wanted to do better than my parents and my parents encour-

aged me to do that. It was quite clear to me that there was economic difficulty about the place, things like buying clothes were a problem, and so I had a job after school. I was 15 and I worked in a deli every night. The downside was that I couldn't play sport in the school teams, because I was working, but I was surrounded by customers and I learned a lot."

Cockburn's reputation in business — and unusually for a nationalised industry — is as a customer service-driven manager. Although he repeatedly gives the impression that his own world begins and ends with the Post Office, that, from his perspective, the rest of the world revolves around it, when it comes to examining the external view of the Post Office and its services he seems able to detach himself sufficiently to cast a critical eye.

He becomes increasingly animated as he discusses it. "I suppose I do have a strong sense of ownership towards it and what is wonderful now is it's mine. It's my great big train set and I can do what I want with it. Yes I am passionate about it and I expect the

same passion from the people who work here. But it is not all consuming. I can visualise myself doing other things."

Some people might find that surprising given the hours he puts in at the Post Office. He says he does not know if he can be accurately classified as a workaholic. "The hours are long," he says. "I get in at 8.30 am and if I'm home in time to see the 9-o'clock news then I'm doing well. I go to bed maybe three evenings a week."

At work, he prides himself on being a visible boss. "I like meeting our front-line employees. What they can tell me is far more important than what I can tell them. I have worked with various bosses who have been very rank conscious and I never wanted to model myself on people like that. Perhaps that's because I'm still young enough to remember what it is like to work for that type of person. You must fight against grandeur and self-importance. It's very easy to get seduced by it." Gesturing to his large but functional and darkly male office — dominated by several large oil paintings of trains — he says: "You've got to break away from the nest."

Yet despite his "people-pulling" cockburn does not crave their friendship in the same way that he craves success. He does what he does because it is good for the business, not because it is good for his own popularity. He is not shy of taking unpopular decisions. Some years ago, despite protests, he instructed all senior managers to do away with their drinks cabinets, and he, of course, led by example. They must all be forced to leave their "nests".

Cockburn's appointment is for a three-year term, his fourth successive such term, since being made a director. "I would want to stay for as long as it was felt that I genuinely added value," he says. Does that mean that in three years he might consider a fresh challenge? "Oh I think so," he replies. "Yes, there is another job in me. I'm quite good at running large service businesses and I know from experience how to manage cultures and how to find the levers and buttons of change." His comments would not surprise his friend Coughlan. "I am sure he has his eye on the next thing. He certainly won't stop here."

I do have a strong sense of ownership and what is wonderful now is it's mine. It's my great big train set

Managing agency at Lloyd's failed to monitor exposure of LMX syndicate

By Patricia Tehan

AN independent report into losses at Lloyd's syndicate 1084, managed by the Cuthbert Heath agency, finds that the underwriter misjudged the syndicate's exposure and its reinsurance protection. That led to an average loss of £22,335 for its names.

The 14-month enquiry, headed by Peter DuBuisson, a partner in BDO Binder Hamlyn, the accountancy firm, also found that Cuthbert Heath failed to monitor the syndicate's exposure and protection.

The syndicate lost 142 per cent of its underwriting capacity in the 1988 year of account. The 197 names on the syndicate shared a £4.4 million loss as claims flooded in after the explosion on the Piper Alpha rig in the North Sea. Graham Nash, the underwriter responsible for the reinsurance programme, resigned in July 1988, a few days after the explosion. He has not given the loss review committee an explanation of the shortage of cover. The report finds that Cuthbert Heath did not monitor the reinsurance protection adequately.

Syndicate 1084 was set up

in 1988. It specialised in the now notorious London market excess of loss (LMX) reinsurance business. A loss of more than 100 per cent of capacity automatically triggers a loss review under Lloyd's rules.

The report also finds that insufficient regard was given by the managing agent to the principle of equity between names on different years of account. Names on the 1988 year benefited from the recovery of \$5 million under a



Doll-Steinberg appeal

retroactive reinsurance policy, but those on the 1991 year were charged the cost of recovery.

Meanwhile, one of the sharpest critics of Lloyd's set out his manifesto for an election to its ruling council. Alfred Doll-Steinberg, chairman of the Goods Walker Action Group, is one of ten candidates standing for a vacancy for an external member.

Other candidates include David James, chairman of Davies & Newman, Dan-Air's parent company, and Andy Ripley, the former England rugby international. Four seats for internal members are also up for election. Ballot papers were posted yesterday and the winners will be announced on November 25.

Mr Doll-Steinberg has written to the Goods Walker Action Group's 2,400 members asking for their support. He calls for a negotiated solution to the difficulties faced by names who have been severely affected by losses that are not just the result of bad luck. This is needed, he says, "to avoid years of litigation, with all the damaging consequences for Lloyd's business".

He says that if elected, he would press for reforms to transform the principle of the primacy of names' interests "from the pious wish to reality".

Names' interests, he maintains, rank third at Lloyd's, below those of policyholders and Lloyd's professionals.

The letter argues that a distinction should be made between policyholders from the general public and other Lloyd's syndicates that are policyholders. Mr Doll-Steinberg writes: "Another problem for the name is that the professionals in the market are reimbursed mainly out of cash flow and they bear none of the losses; so there is a temptation for them to write policies to earn premium, without enquiring too closely about the insured risk."

He says he supports the view of Colin Murray, a member of committee of Lloyd's council, that the fortunes of Lloyd's insiders should be more closely tied to those of the names they serve. "If these changes do not come about spontaneously," he says, "a new Lloyd's Act will be needed — and soon."

Dull markets maul Tokyo brokers

FROM RESURTER IN TOKYO

SLIM trading volume and stagnant share prices battered Japan's brokerage earnings in the six months to September 30, forcing all but one of the top 14 firms to announce net losses at their parent companies on Friday.

Had the brokerages not availed themselves of an official exemption allowing them to postpone writing off losses on securities holdings until the business year ends in March, the flow of red ink would have been greater, analysts said.

The Big Four brokerages retained their September forecasts for the full year to March, hoping at least to break even at the net level. Executives, however, suggested that achieving even those modest hopes could prove difficult. Masao Yuki, Nikko Securities executive vice-president, said: "We did not revise our forecast because it was too soon. But it is difficult to expect a sharp recovery in trading volume for the latter half."

Only Daiwa Securities managed to

avoid red ink at the net level in the first half, scraping by with zero profit against 10.8 billion yen (£5.1 million) last year.

Daiwa also kept its September forecast of a ¥6 billion parent net profit in 1992/3 against a net loss of ¥43.5 billion in 1991/2. Hiromitsu Sogame, managing director, said: "A forecast based on daily stock market turnover of ¥400 billion in the second half may look too high, but we think that management will need to try hard to achieve the forecast."

Nomura Securities posted an ¥8.49 billion net loss (¥18.1 billion profit in the first half). It said it expected zero net profit (¥31.6 billion) for the full year. Yasuhiro Mizumachi, executive vice-president, said: "Although the discount rate was lowered twice in the half year, the stock market remained stagnant and our earnings were the poorest ever." He appeared resigned, however, to the blow to the brokerage's prestige. "At the current market level, this is no situation in which to compete," he said.

Nikko Securities reported a ¥611 million parent net loss (¥1.25 billion

profit) and also confirmed it expects zero net profits (¥25.9 billion loss) for the full year.

Yamaichi Securities fared worst among the Big Four, reporting a ¥15.79 billion parent net loss and a ¥19.32 billion current loss. It expects zero net profits (¥3.2 billion loss) in 1992/3. A Yamaichi executive said the brokerage would do all it could to avoid cutting its annual dividend, including continuing cost-cutting measures.

Analysts said the brokerages could face pressure to cut their full-year forecasts if, as expected, stock market volume and share prices remained in a slump.

Tokyo's key Nikkei share average closed up 104.61 points, or 0.61 per cent at 17,177.65 yesterday — less than half its December 1989 peak — and no one expects an upturn anytime soon.

Nozomu Kunishige, a financial analyst at Kleinwort Benson International, said: "They are cutting costs, but that won't have a big impact in the second half so if the market stays as it is, they may have to cut their forecasts."

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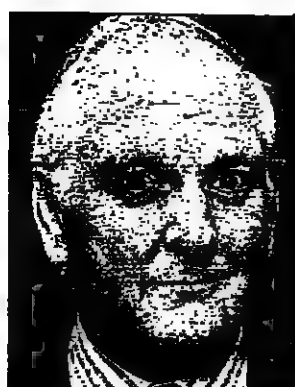
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THE M&G GROUP

Smaller firms trade expanded

BY PHILIP PANGALOS



SMITH New Court, the stockbroker, and Winterflood Securities, which specialises in smaller companies broking, are continuing to expand coverage of smaller stocks, despite contrasting moves by other securities houses.

Smith and Winterflood are expanding coverage to help firms faced with the transfer of trading in their shares from the stock exchange Seaq system to the Company Bulletin Board, which provides information to match buyers and sellers of shares in illiquid smaller firms.

Yesterday, Smith began dealing in another 44 smaller companies, making a total of 85, faced with transfers to the Company Bulletin Board as a

The news will bring further relief to smaller companies after SG Warburg Securities and County NatWest last month significantly reduced their coverage of smaller stocks. UBS Phillips & Drew followed this month.

Shares cannot be traded on Seag under normal stock exchange rules, unless they are dealt in by at least two market-makers.

Smith, in conjunction with Winterflood, intends to continue narrowing the width of prices to promote more investor interest in this sector.

Brian Winterlood, managing director, said: "We are well ahead of the game and we will continue to be, although things are still tough."

Peking dispute hits firms with HK links

THE friction between China and Chris Patten, the governor of Hong Kong, over unilateral reforms and the new airport resulted in a sharp markdown in shares of companies with strong trading links in the area.

China said that it would reverse any reforms taken unilaterally once it took over the colony in 1997. It is also threatening to withdraw financial backing for the airport if Hong Kong tries to go ahead alone with the project.

Hardest hit among those companies with close Hong Kong interests were HSBC, down 20p at 480p, Cable & Wireless 12p to 595p, and Leasing 14p to 504p. Dealers in London said the Hong Kong stock market could be poised for a fall of between 5 and 10 per cent. The rest of the equity market spent a volatile session, but succeeded in consolidating the strong gains seen this week, helped by speculation about another cut in bank base rates.

Attempts by squeezed market-makers to knock prices first thing in the hope of attracting sellers proved short-lived, with selective buying soon pushing shares higher again. But the absence of any signal from the Bank of England for a further cut in rates left shares drifting again.

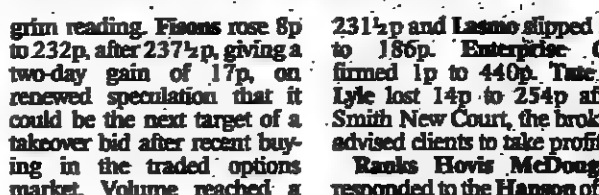
The FT-SE 100 index ended below its best of the day, 1.6 points up at 2,669.7, with 586 million shares traded, a rise on the week of 105.8. The index lost a further 27p to 2,642.40 ahead of next week's third-quarter results. The figures are expected to make

SHARES CHEERED BY HOPES OF ANOTHER CUT IN BASE RATE

FT all-share index (rupees)

CNP share price

Oct 92 Nov 92 Dec 92 Jan 93 Feb 93 Mar 93 Apr 93 May 93 Jun 93 Jul 93 Aug 93 Sep 93 Oct 93



Ocean Group, the environmental and shipping services company, fell 13p to 191p in the wake of another round of profit downgradings. Kleinwort Benson and Charterhouse Tilney have reduced their forecasts. Kleinwort has trimmed its by £1 million, to £40 million.

231 1/2p and Lasso slipped to 186p. Enterprise (1) firmed 1p to 440p. Tase Lyle lost 1 1/2p to 254 1/2p. Smith New Court, the broker, advised clients to take profits.

Ranks Hovis McDougall responded to the Hanson of document by calling the industrial conglomerate an "opportunistic predator". Hanson is offering 220p a share valuing RHM, 2p firmer at 249 1/2p at £780 million. Hanson was virtually unchanged at 237 1/2p.

Interest rate speculation helped the high street banks. Barclays firmed 6p to 340, Lloyds 18p to 452p, National Westminster 12p to 387p after 391p, and Royal Bank of Scotland 8p to 172p.

Readers recovered some of this week's lost ground, with a rise of 22p to £12.22. Arthur Lee fell 13p to 81p after G. H. Firth sold 7.35 million shares to Carclo Engineering at 80p. Carclo was steady at 139p.

MICHAEL CLAR

Chubb Security	189	-
Linux Printing Tools (130)	190	-
Tepnel Diagnostics (120)	179	-
Trinity (120)	133	-
Veritas (145)	87	-

MICHAEL CLARK

THE TIMES PORTFOLIO DEALING SERVICE

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Chubb Security	189	-
Luxx Printing Techs (130)	190	-
Teymel Diagnostics (120)	179	-
Trinity (120)	133	-
Vardon (45)	51	-

RIGHTS ISSUES

Capital Industries N/P (78)	14	-
ITT Group N/P (17)	40	-
Greenleaf N/P (25)	40	-

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WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 1992

Banking on bad memories

A year is a long time in banking. Last autumn, banks were fighting hard not to have to tell customers in advance how much they would be paying for charges and interest. It would cost banks £60 million a year, Trevor Blackder, their spokesman, said to anyone who would listen. Yet none of the banks could explain quite how such costs could be logged up by sending out statements a fortnight before charges were due to be levied.

Now, Mr Blackder seems to have changed his story. He is now delighted that National Westminster will be the first of the big four banks to announce it is going to pre-notify accountholders of charges.

How selective NatWest's memory is. He tells us that the bank will be the first of the big four to offer such a service next March. The bank also waxes lyrical about wanting to serve customers and how important it was for customers and customer groups to be told about charges before they are deducted from accounts.

What it neglects to say is that the

views of the customers and consumers groups cut little ice in the negotiations on the code last autumn. It is now only days away from customers of another bank receiving their first statement telling them in advance of charges that NatWest is acting. Competition is a wonderful thing.

TSB customers will be told of charges in advance. The bank reckons it will not cost it much more than £1 million to offer a service that was regarded as important in many of the submissions on the first draft of the banking code, which tried to enshrine the rights of the banks rather than those of the customers.

They had to start again when hundreds of customers and consumer organisations lambasted the original. It was not, of course, a U-turn, more a change of emphasis, said the banks when representing the code, which was implemented in



COMMENT
LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

March. There has been another change of emphasis since the code was published last December. It then appeared that banks would foot the bill for disputed withdrawals from cash machines, unless they could prove the customer had been negligent.

This was at the suggestion of Laurence Shurman, the banking ombudsman. The banks would change their attitude and customers would not automatically be regarded as fraudsters if they disputed a payment. Unfortunately, banks could not mend their ways. They are still

tending to refuse to compensate customers on the grounds that their machines are infallible and if money was withdrawn it could only have happened by using the correct card and the correct personal identification number.

A test case is being prepared. It will be interesting to see whether the banks will wish evidence of possible liability to be aired publicly by computer experts, or whether, once again, they will settle on the steps of the court without any embarrassing details being revealed.

Any public examination of the

issue would be welcomed by the millions of customers who have never suffered a disputed withdrawal but who worry that they would not be believed if they did and also are anxious that their savings could be plundered for days on end between statements without their knowing.

A reassuring statement of policy from one of the banks could reassure customers and set the others on the same course.

Playing the game

It is rumoured that the banks have been hauled over the coals by the Bank of England this week, to press them into joining the proposed Personal Investment Authority. If this and other tales of discreet arm twisting of building societies and life offices are true, it is a welcome move.

Ever since Sir Kenneth Clucas

proposed that the regulatory system should be drastically simplified and reduced to a single authority, the big financial institutions have been squabbling with each other like spoilt children to try to avoid joining. They seem to have lost sight of the reason for the Personal Investment Authority, to provide more consistent and efficient regulation.

Banks and building societies would much rather continue their cosy regulatory relationship with the Securities and Investments Board, which has always let them do pretty much what they like, than subject themselves to the more rigorous regime likely under the Personal Investment Authority.

Life offices are playing a similarly counterproductive game, saying that they will not play unless the banks and building societies do. The big high street institutions, as well as the life offices, must join the Personal Investment Authority. They need to be as sternly regulated as the smallest insurance agent. They should be leading the fight for efficient regulation, not trying to prevent it.

A guide to surviving the depths of recession

By LINDSAY COOK AND SARA MCCONNELL

STRUGGLING to survive in the longest recession on record is proving tough for many. The rapidly falling mortgage rates have been matched by plunging house prices. Property is the cheapest it has been in earnings and payments terms since the beginning of the seventies, but first-time buyers are worried that interest

rates will escalate again, or that their jobs will disappear along with hundreds of thousands of others. Weekend Money has worked out a survival guide to answer many of the questions people are asking and to help them get their own personal economies into better shape than that of the country.

THE most frequently asked question by home owners is whether they should convert their variable mortgage, which is about to come down to 9.25 per cent, into a fixed rate one at rates of about 8 per cent. After a mortgage payment roller-coaster, certainty seems attractive to those who took out loans in 1988, and then saw the payments climb rapidly by more than 50 per cent over the next 18 months.

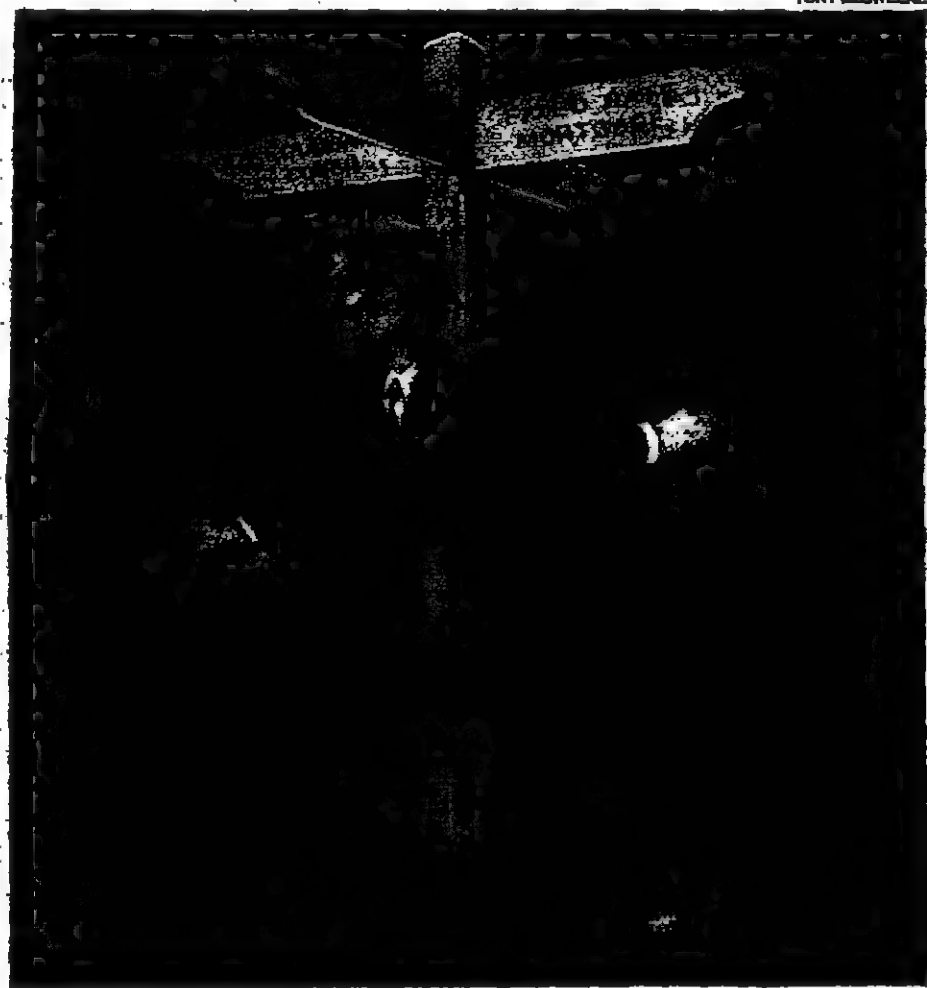
The best fixed-rate deals in recent years were at 10 per cent or less, and fixed for five years in 1987 and 1988.

Analysts and building societies are hoping for another 2 percentage points off bank base rates, which could give standard mortgage rates of 7.75 per cent and lower for large loans or first-time buyers. At that time, fixing could be worthwhile. In the meantime, for those of a nervous disposition, capped mortgage rates are available at 8.99 per cent and lower. These will go down if variable rates fall below the cap. The initial fees are usually higher than for fixed mortgages and the length of guarantee shorter.

The fixes are usually for two, three or five years, and there are penalties for people who cash in before the period is over. This makes them unsuitable for people who are paying a mortgage on a property while renting it out, unless they will be buying another property when they finally sell. Some loans cannot be transferred in the early years. The savings may be outweighed by more expensive compulsory insurance, the valuation and legal fees and administration fees of up to £300.

Those watching savings rates being eroded often consider paying off part of their mortgage to reduce outgoings. With mortgage rates at 9.25 per cent the cost is reduced to 6.93 per cent after tax relief is taken off the first £30,000. It could be even lower for large loans or those with new buyers' discounts. Compounded savings rates are currently keeping pace for basic rate taxpayers. It is, therefore, worth keeping the relief.

Loans above £30,000 cost the full amount and savings



TONY MCGWENNEY

rates are not keeping pace. The best time to pay a lump sum off a building society loan is just before the end of its financial year. Then the next year's calculations take the reduction into account. Most societies have a year that coincides with the calendar year. The Halifax's is January 31.

Home owners should not leave themselves without emergency money by paying off a lump sum. The monthly savings can also restore investments. There is nothing to stop a remortgage or application for a further advance later. Those wanting to move house are being frightened off by the low valuations estate agents are quoting. Anyone moving to a larger property can still get a bargain. Prices are not likely to rise in the short term. No one need feel panicked to buy as there are lots of properties to rent at rates lower than mortgage payments and with no repairs or insurance to pay for.

INVESTING IN EQUITIES

THE volatility of stock markets since the crash five years ago has frightened new and even established investors away. Now, as interest rates are set to fall again, a range of products that safeguard the initial investment are competing for investors' lump sums. Shellshocked investors are still not sure whether they can afford to go into equity-based investments. The first rule to remember is that the guarantee is only as good as the company offering it.

Save & Prosper this week announced details of a new five-year stock market bond for the nervous. It will start accepting investments on November 16. This guarantees that 99 per cent of the original investment will increase in line with the FT-SE index and there will be no basic rate tax to pay. If the

index falls, the investors get their money back. The very cautious can forgo some of the potential gain by locking in profits of up to 50 per cent in five stages.

Several bonds, including Citibank Life's Capital Guaranteed 100, have an option to lock in 50 per cent of growth. Investors are guaranteed 100 per cent of any increase in the FT-SE 100 index, net of tax. The Britannia Building Society's Triple Bond guarantees investors 110 per cent of the growth of FT-SE 100 companies over five years. If the index falls, investors get their money back.

As with similar guarantees, investors forgo any dividend income. At worst they get their money back. If they need the money early they could lose if the stock market is down when they need to withdraw.

Association, said insurance could add half as much again to the cost of borrowing. Insurance premiums, normally charged as a sum per £100 or £1,000 of the monthly loan repayment, are added to the repayment. Insurance covering credit card payments is calculated as a percentage of the monthly balance.

Many of these policies have restrictions on the cover. Some, including NatWest's Credit Guard cover, do not cover redundancy at all. Those that do cover unemployment will not pay out for the first two or three months, depending on the terms of the contract.

Similar restrictions apply to mortgage payment protection insurance. A few lenders, including the Woolwich, Birmingham Midshires and NatWest, offer insurance to existing borrowers, but most are unwilling to take on existing customers because they are more likely to claim. The Woolwich, which charges a fairly typical £6.50 per £100 of monthly payment, has a waiting period for existing borrowers of 180 days before they can claim, against 90 days for new borrowers.

LOANS FROM THE COMPANY

TAKING out a company loan at a preferential rate used to be one way of easing financial problems, but it is less attractive now.

The mortgage offers made by banks, building societies and insurance companies to staff are not such a good deal as they were. When standard mortgage rates were 15.4 per cent, the rate of about 5 per cent on the first £50,000 borrowed looked enviable. Now variable rates have shrunk to 9.25 per cent.

Those earning more than £8,500 a year are taxed on loans as a benefit in kind, based on the difference between the rate on their loans and the Inland Revenue's "official interest rate". This will fall to 9.75 per cent on November 6, bringing it closer to the typical mortgage rate. Employees will, therefore, have to pay tax on 4.75 per cent of their loan at their highest rate. A higher rate taxpayer with a £50,000 preferential loan will have a tax bill of £950 on the £2,335 difference between the official rate and the standard rate.

Leaving a job means leaving the loan, as does being made redundant. A conventional mortgage costs about the same and gives more flexibility.

To surrender or not to surrender

ENDOWMENT POLICIES

SURRENDERING an endowment policy is a tempting option for people wanting to cut down their outgoings and generate immediate cash, particularly for those who were sold such policies on the back of a mortgage during the late 1980s housing boom.

Some home owners will have moved house and changed to a repayment mortgage, or changed to lengthen the mortgage period. Others may decide to save through personal equity plans or to put more into their pension to pay off the loan. Surrendering a policy in the early years will certainly mean getting back less than the investment.

Beale Dobie, which specialises in selling secondhand life policies, said an estimated 1,000 people a week surrendered policies to life offices, losing an average of £1,500 on a £10,000 policy.

Those desperate for cash can obtain up to 33 per cent more than the surrender value by selling, according to Policy Portfolio, another specialist firm. Saleable policies must have been running for at

least four years, have a surrender value of more than £1,000 and be issued by one of the top 20 life offices.

A way of continuing to own the policy without paying any more premiums is to make the policy "paid up".

The investment still earns bonuses every year and a terminal bonus at the end of the term. The sum assured that the office guarantees to pay on death or maturity is reduced, but policyholders are almost certain to get back more than their original investment.

Life offices have different rules for making policies paid up. Scottish Widows, for example, will make policies paid up, provided the paid-up value of the policy is at least £1,000.

The policies will continue to earn bonuses and be treated as with-profits policies. Alternatively, Scottish Life insists that policies have to have run for five years to continue to earn bonuses when they are paid up. If they have run for less than five years, they do not earn bonuses.

STARTING A FAMILY

WOMEN considering starting a family on existing levels of maternity benefit will get a better deal if they wait for a new European Commission directive on maternity pay to be implemented.

This autumn's Employment Bill is likely to contain clauses entitling women to a minimum of 14 weeks' leave on sick pay, regardless of how long they have worked for their present employer. At present, prospective mothers who have worked for less than two years full time, or five years part time, for the same employer, have no right to maternity pay. The changes have to be implemented in two years. British women who fulfil the present service requirements are entitled to six weeks' leave on 90 per cent of their salary, followed by a further 12 weeks' leave on statutory maternity pay.

The cost of bringing up a child from birth to age 16 has risen 60 per cent in nine years, to £32,000 from £20,000, according to the Legal & General. This figure assumes that the mother will go back to work after maternity leave and continue working while the child grows up. L&G says average take home pay for women is £7,800.

Swift clearance of debts makes sense

THOSE worrying about their financial future have two options with credit cards and personal loans — to pay them off as quickly as possible or to insure the payments so that redundancy does not lead to the county court.

Base rates may have almost halved over the past two years, but the rates charged on these accounts are moving down slowly and by much less.

One way of eliminating credit card debt is to pay it off with savings. It is worth settling a £1,000 credit card bill, costing about 25 per cent a year, by using £1,000 worth of building society savings, earning just under 5 per cent net a year. The Halifax, which pays 4.95 per cent net 6.6 per cent gross, on balances of £1,000 in its instant access account, said: "It makes sense to get rid of credit card debt first and foremost so you can start off with a clean slate." The building society also pointed out that having more than £8,000 worth of savings could disqualify people from obtaining some state benefits. The monthly credit payments can be used to restore savings in the longer term.

CREDIT CARDS

Unsecured bank loans or overdrafts can be paid off early in a similar way, but borrowers should check there is no penalty for early repayment. These can be substantial.

The rates on these are also starting to fall, making authorised overdrafts and loans minimally cheaper than credit cards. Barclays will charge an annual rate of 23.9 per cent on loans of between £500 and £2,500 from November 17. Authorised overdrafts cost 21.3 per cent a year. The most expensive loan is an unauthorised overdraft, which costs 35.7 per cent a year at Barclays.

Reducing debts is cheaper than relying on payment protection insurance. This is sold with the loan and will meet the regular payments for 12 months or two years, if the borrower is made redundant or is unable to work through sickness or disability. However, Jean Eaglesham, head of money policy at the Consumers'

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Mortgage-holders find low-cost policies are not safe as houses

Helplines have been set up for borrowers who face shortfalls on their loans, says Sara McConnell

MILLIONS of home owners face the prospect that low-cost endowment policies taken out to pay off mortgages might not do so.

However, holders of traditional, with-profits policies are not warned by life offices if the policies are not performing as well as expected. There are normally no mid-term performance reviews, as there are with newer, unit-linked contracts.

Several companies have responded to the information gap this week by setting up helplines. Investors can use the lines to check whether their endowment policies, on present performance, will pay off mortgages after 25 years and, if not, what to do about it.

They need not make any commitment in return, although in some cases a small fee is charged.

Nic Round Associates, a financial adviser based in Shropshire, has set up an enquiry line for holders of low-cost endowment policies. The performance of with-profits policies is not normally reviewed, because good and bad performance is meant to be "smoothed out".

Nic Round will send a package of information to those ringing his enquiry line



(0743 248108). This includes a sheet of questions and answers on such topics as "Is my mortgage at risk with an endowment?" and "Will the tax-free lump sums payable?"

The answer in both cases is that there is no guarantee. Mr Round says that those sold policies before the Financial Services Act was implemented in 1988 may have been most seriously misled because companies were allowed to use past performance to make future projections. This practice has now been outlawed but many people still believe

the standard projections used by life offices constitute a guarantee. A policyholder who wants an endowment reviewed signs a letter authorising the life office to

be paid to generate enough cash. There is a fee of £15, but customers who are not satisfied with the review they receive will not have to pay.

Blyth McKenna, a London intermediary, has set up a similar helpline on 071-225 4119. It will work out what the policy will be worth at maturity, using the present lower industry standard projection rate of 7 per cent. It will also use the proposed lower standard rate of 5 per cent, which life offices will have to use from next year to work out projections. Investors will be offered several

Many people still believe that the standard projections offered by life offices amount to guarantees

give details of the policy. Nic Round Associates will then work out what bonus rate is needed every year to cover the mortgage. If performance is falling short, the firm will work out what premiums need

different options for making up shortfalls. They could arrange with lenders to pay back enough capital on their mortgages to reduce loans to the amounts likely to be available by maturity dates.

Alternatively, they could increase endowment premiums to make up shortfalls, or fund shortfalls with other investments such as personal equity plans (PEPs), instead of putting more money into the endowments.

The service is free to existing Blyth McKenna customers; others are charged £15.

Investors who are more worried about annuity rates can call another new helpline, set up this week by Towry Law, a Windsor-based intermediary, on 0753 868244. The free helpline will give comparisons between leading life offices' annuity rates, updated hourly.

Many people believe, wrongly, that they have to buy retirement annuities from the companies that provide their pensions. Towry Law says. This is not the case. Although part of a pension fund does have to be used to buy an annuity paying out a regular income for life, investors can choose whichever companies they like.

Graham Ashley, the manager of the new service, says: "Only one person in four takes advantage of his or her contracted right to shop around for the best pension annuity. As a result, most people are being stuffed into smaller pensions."

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Source: Save & Prosper/Micropal.

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Cheaper home loans offered

LENDERS have reacted to last week's base-rate reduction with a range of fixed-rate mortgages, capped rates and discounts, giving the cheapest loans seen in two decades (Sara McConnell writes).

The TSB has some of the cheapest rates on offer at the moment including a three-year fixed rate of 7.85 per cent (an annual percentage rate of 8.2 per cent for endowment loans and 8.4 per cent for repayment loans) and a five-year fixed rate of 8.2 per cent (APR 8.6 per cent on endowments, 8.8 per cent on repayments). A two-year capped rate at 7.5 per cent (APR 7.8 per cent for endowments) is also on offer, allowing borrowers to take advantage of further interest rate cuts. An arrangement fee of £250 applies on the capped rate and £195 on the fixed rates. TSB's standard rate is cut to 9.25 per cent immediately for new borrowers, and from December 1 for existing borrowers.

A five-year fixed rate of 8.25 per cent (APR 8.5 per cent) is available from Halifax Building Society. The loan can be linked to an endowment or pension or can be taken as a repayment and there is an arrangement fee of £250. The society also has a two-year fixed-rate loan of 7.99 per cent for two years.

Yorkshire Building Society has topped the Halifax at the post with a two-year fixed rate of 7.5 per cent (APR 7.7 per cent) and a three-year fixed rate of 7.99 per cent (APR 8.2 per cent). Both loans have a £175 arrangement fee and borrowers have to take out buildings and contents insurance with the society, as well as accident, sickness and redundancy cover. The society's new variable rate is 9.25 per cent.

Two-year fixed-rate money at 7.5 per cent (APR 7.8 per cent) is also on offer from Scarborough Building Society. The society's three-year fixed rate is 7.75 per cent (APR 8.0 per cent) and its five-year rate 8.5 per cent (APR 8.8 per cent). More expensive two-year and three-year fixed rates come from the Bristol & West, which has a three-year fix at 8.5 per cent and a five-year fix at 8.99 per cent. A rarer one-

year fixed rate of 6.89 per cent can be obtained from Chase de Vere Home Loans, the specialist mortgage broker. The loan carries a £250 arrangement fee. Three-year and five-year fixed rates are more expensive than from some of the high street building societies, however. The five-year loan has a rate of 8.99 per cent with a fee of £250 while the three-year loan has a rate of 8.49 per cent with a fee of £250.

First-time buyers are the target of the Woolwich, which is offering a 2.35 per cent discount off its standard rate to those taking out a loan of more than £60,000. This will bring their rate down to 6.95 per cent for the first year. Those borrowing more than 90 per cent of the property's value and more than £60,000 will get a discount of 1.5 per cent, giving a discounted rate of 7.8 per cent. First-time buyers borrowing less than £60,000 will get a discount of 2.10 per cent for the first year when the loan is 90 per cent or less of the value of the property and 1.31 per cent if greater.

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Coming to grips with negative equity

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

THE one million or more home owners whose houses and flats are worth less than their mortgages may be clinging to the hope that the government initiatives announced this week will help them to move.

Unfortunately, few will benefit from the change in law which will allow building societies to lend up to £25,000 in unsecured loans. The chance to transfer a shortfall on one property to another mortgage on another property may help a few more. Until now, owners have not been able to get tax relief on a new property if they have not redeemed the old loan.

However, the main problem of falling prices has not been addressed, building societies and housing analysts say. Last month's 3.1 per cent fall recorded by the Halifax house price index pushed thousands more into the debt trap. Lenders are still lobbying the government for a move to stop the market from spiralling downwards.

They suggest a doubling of the mortgage tax relief limit to £60,000 immediately for all new purchases or an announcement now that such an increase will operate from the Budget in the spring. This could be for purchases over a one-year period and the higher limit could be phased out, along with all other mortgage



Home comforts: Paul and Sandra Awcock, who resorted to the rental market to get more space for their son, Thomas

tax relief over five or ten years. Lower interest rates and steady or slowly rising house prices would compensate borrowers for the loss of the tax relief. If the housing market were moved back on to a willing buyer, willing seller basis, valuations for properties for sale should improve. Cautious valuers, afraid of a backlog of claims from lenders for optimistic or careless assessments, are tending to look to the last three sales in an area. In many cases, this means they value ordinary properties by using the sale prices for repossessed ones. If ordinary sales outnumbered repossessed ones, such valuations should be higher.

but in most cases it has chosen not to do so. In a few cases, Nationwide Building Society advanced more than the limit by using a subsidiary company to make separate loans. Such cases were few and far between.

The Woolwich was working on a scheme to reduce the cost by allowing the additional loan to be secured on the home of parents or grandparents when the government measures were announced.

Paul and Sandra Awcock, who were featured in *Weekend Money* in July, bought their flat in Littlehampton, Sussex, for £45,000 and had it valued at £27,000 this summer. At the time they wanted to be able to sell and buy a larger flat to give their son, Thomas, more space. Their building society was unable to help. When they first talked to the society, a member of staff suggested they could resolve their problem by handing over the keys. The couple would not consider that and later the lender made it clear that it would not either.

Since then, they have given up hope of selling and have let their flat and rented another larger one themselves. It only took three weeks to let their flat and although the rent does not cover the mortgage payments and the agent's fees, each reduction in mortgage rates cuts their monthly loss.

Mr Awcock said: "As rates come down we will benefit and we have so much more space and the use of a garden for our son. We have taken our flat off the market and will wait until there is a little more confidence before we try to sell again." However, when that happens, the increased availability of unsecured loans and the easing of mortgage tax relief restrictions would help, he added.

Lenders are concerned that people whose property price is below the mortgage are abandoning their homes. One top ten society reports that 40 per cent of visits to properties where there are arrears find the owner has disappeared. In some cases, they have sublet without making any arrangements with the lender or passing on the rent received.

Bleak prospects for BES investors

By LIZ DOAN

THE first Business Expansion Schemes to get tax relief on property loans are celebrating their fourth birthday. The collapse in the property market since the schemes were set up means that the celebrations are, to say the least, muted.

One shareholder in Williams de Bro's Link Assured Tenancy Scheme, the first of its kind, launched in September, 1988, describes the outlook for himself and his fellow investors as "pretty grim". He says that many of the properties are in areas such as Southampton and Cambridge, where house prices have plummeted in the past few years.

The de Bro scheme is insured against price falls, but only to 75 per cent of the purchase price. The first five per cent is also uncovered. The investor reckons that many of the properties are now worth much less than 75 per cent. Another worry is the possibility of shareholders who have fallen on hard times trying to force early property sell-offs while the market remains in the doldrums. The de

Bro scheme consists of numerous small companies, each with just nine shareholders who, therefore, each control 11 per cent of the voting rights.

However, although he does not expect to see any return on his initial £10,000 investment, this shareholder, at least, is philosophical. Investors who rushed to buy shares in similar schemes set up in March, 1989, have suffered even higher losses, he says. In addition, he recovered £4,000 in BES tax relief, and also enjoys full interest relief on the £8,000 loan taken out to pay for the investment.

Harvey Schulman, the lawyer who devised the de Bro scheme, claims that most of the properties are "still above the 75 per cent floor". He says it is far too early to predict the fate of the scheme, which still has a year to run before decisions have to be made about when, and how, to start selling the assets. He denies shareholders are likely to demand an early sale of individual properties. "It just wouldn't be worth their while. They would lose the tax advantages and, in any case, putting a 'for sale' board outside a

house doesn't guarantee a buyer." Mr Schulman revealed that he had written to the chairman of one assured tenancy BES in which he was an investor requesting the return of his money.

"I was told to get lost. He said I was the only one who had asked for his money back. Directors make the decisions, not individual shareholders," Mr Schulman points out that, with interest rates apparently heading for 6 per cent, some kind of revival in the housing market cannot be ruled out over the next year.

"In any case, I can assure you that a lot of midnight oil is being burnt at the moment devising new and ingenious solutions for shareholders." He is adamant that this particular scheme has three valuable advantages over a substantial number of similar BES companies set up at the same time. "We invested only in new houses, which are much easier to sell; the properties are insured against devaluation; and anyone who invested the full £40,000 allowed under BES rules will have spread their risk over four separate properties."

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Customers cool on pushy sales staff

By SARA MCCONNELL

PUSHY sales assistants who pounce, leaving no time for customers to make their own decisions on mortgages or other financial services are the pet hate of eight of ten respondents to a survey carried out for the Bristol & West building society.

Sales assistants should be honest about what they are selling and customers should be given time to browse and talk to experts for advice. Eight out of ten people want assistants to help them when asked, but ultimately like to make their own decisions about whether and what to buy. Three quarters of people asked agreed strongly that privacy when discussing financial affairs was important. Building societies have obviously not gone far enough in meeting some of these criteria, however. The verdict on whether service in societies had improved was divided. Four out of ten thought service in banks and building societies, as well as other sorts of shops, had improved, while nearly the same number thought it had declined.

Tony FitzSimons, chief executive of B&W, said: "Banks and building societies have a lot to learn when it comes to helping their customers make the right purchasing decisions." In response to the findings of this and earlier surveys the society has invested £10 million in launching its Financial Centres. Six have been opened in the past year with more scheduled for 1993.

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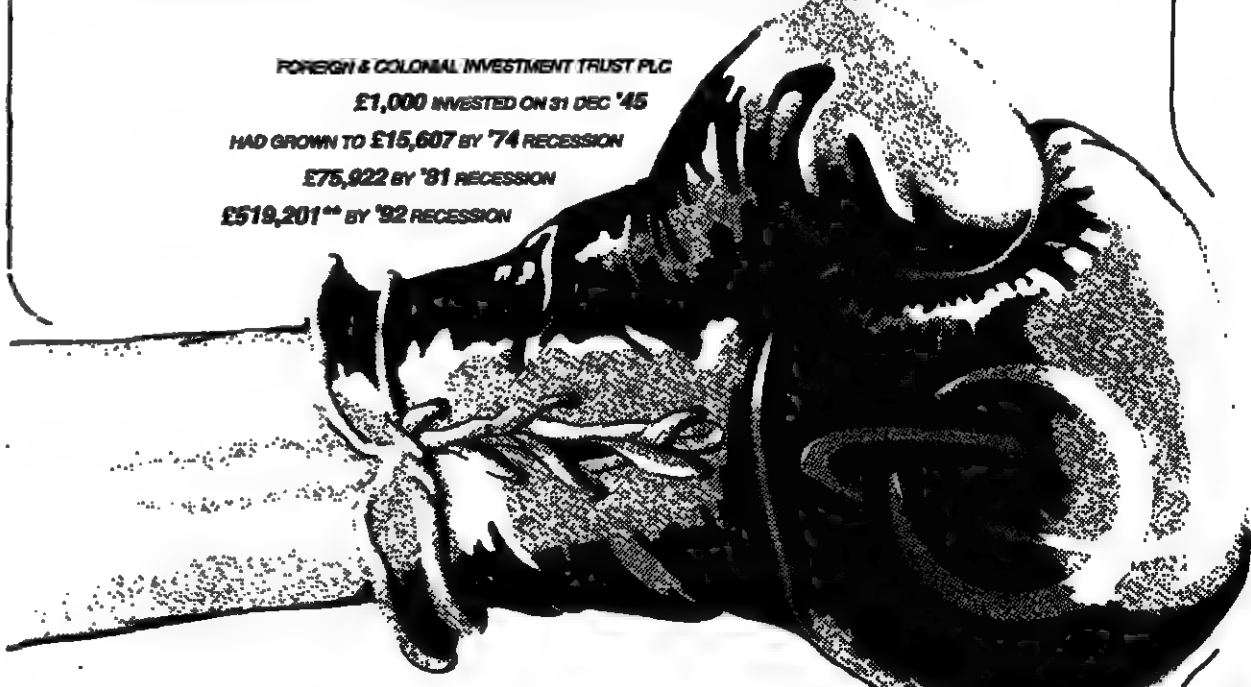
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Lloyds branches out with computer link

BY LINDSAY COOK

LLOYDS Bank stepped into the twentieth century this week when it linked the computers at most of its branches. Building societies have long operated so that any branch can be used without checks or delays. Lloyds has now completed a five-year programme to link 1,500 of its branches. This means customers can cash cheques in any of these

branches without paying for a phone call to verify their account is in good order. It should also mean instant crediting of cheques or cash paid in at one branch when the account is held at another.

Transactions that customers will be able to carry out at branches other than their own include transferring money between accounts on the same

day, provided they are held at the same branch, obtaining details of recent debits and credits, changing address details or stopping a cheque.

Gerry Solomon, senior general manager, UK retail banking, said: "This is a major improvement in service for customers, many of whom live in one place and work in another."

Monthly incomes from savings are falling. Helen Pridham considers the options

Making the most of lower rates

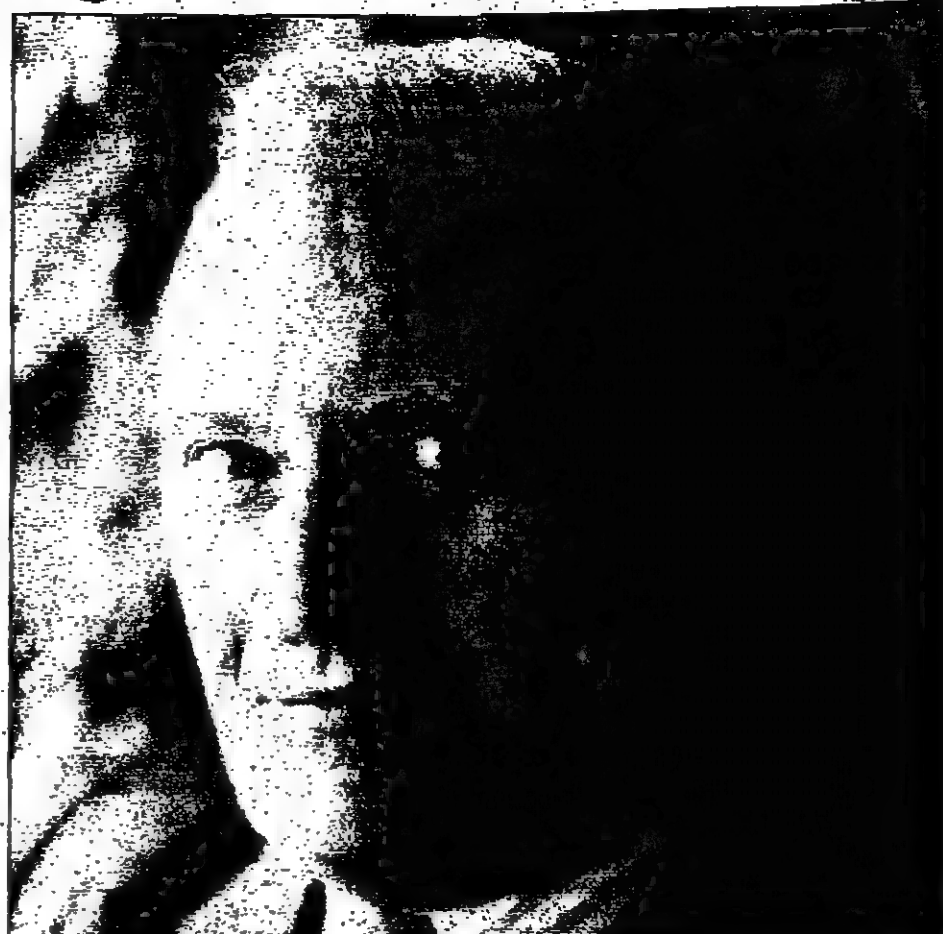
FALLING interest rates are bad news for investors who rely on their savings to provide extra monthly income to meet living expenses. With further cuts to come, to take account of last week's base rate reduction, such investors need to re-examine their options carefully and to consider putting part of their capital into fixed-rate investments.

One of the most popular sources of monthly income is the National Savings Income Bond, which in the last financial year attracted more than £600 million. It had already been announced before last week's interest rate cut that the return on the bond would fall from 9 per cent to 8 per cent gross (6 per cent net of basic rate tax) on November 5. Although the government is clearly keen to keep National Savings rates competitive, to help fund its borrowing requirement, it is also wary of upsetting the building societies, so a further rate cut on the bond is possible.

Banks and building societies were among the first to recognise the demand for monthly income. The option is usually available on longer-term investment accounts, subject to a reduction of between 0.25 per cent and 0.5 per cent in the annual interest rate to cover the extra administrative costs.

Abbey National says that about 25 per cent of depositors in its 90-day investment account and high-yield bond take a monthly income. At the Halifax the monthly income facility is requested particularly frequently by investors in the society's Guaranteed Reserve account, which offers fixed-interest rates over periods of one to five years. About 40 per cent of investors in these accounts take a monthly income. A spokesman said: "For investors who need a regular income it is clearly useful to know exactly how much will arrive each month, so that they are able to plan their expenditure, but it does mean they have to be prepared to lock their money away for the term."

The Halifax cut the rates on its Guaranteed Reserve account last weekend and is now offering monthly income investors with £2,000 a rate of 7.625 per cent gross fixed for five years, or 7.954 per cent if they invest £10,000 or more. The rates for one year are



Looking for the best returns: Michael Thompson of Gerrard Vivian Gray

6.926 per cent and 7.254 per cent respectively.

Other sources of fixed income include guaranteed income bonds. They are issued by insurance companies. Among the handful of companies that offer a monthly income, Hill Samuel is now paying 6 per cent net of basic rate tax, guaranteed for five years on investments of £5,000 plus. Until Wednesday, the rate was 6.8 per cent. According to Chase de Vere, the financial adviser, other companies that offer monthly income bonds are Alico, Canada Life, General Portfolio, Liberty Life and Premium Life.

Investors in income bonds sold by UK life companies are protected under the Policyholders Protection Act.

For a fixed income with absolute security, however, there are gilts or government securities that pay a guaranteed amount half-yearly until they reach their redemption date, when their face value is repaid by the government. Investors who want a monthly income can buy six gilts with

appropriate payment dates spread through the year.

Gilts can be purchased relatively cheaply through the National Savings Stock Register via Post Offices. Post Offices can supply booklets with the list of stocks available together with their income payment dates.

Banks and stockbrokers can give advice on gilts. Michael Thompson, associate director of Gerrard Vivian Gray, the private client stockbroker, said: "One problem with

putting together a monthly income portfolio of gilts is that there are only two stocks which pay in June and December. Nevertheless, despite this snag and the rise in gilt prices which followed the cut in base rates, it is still possible to lock into a yield of 8.6 per cent for the next seven years. If interest rates are cut further there is the prospect of capital appreciation as well." To make a specialist gilt like this worthwhile, Mr Thompson advises that investors would need at least £15,000.

An alternative route into

and a unit trust or bond designed to provide a return of capital at the end of a five-year term.

However, Clerical Medical, which has a plan linked to a unit trust, admits that when its first investors plans reach maturity early next year, they are likely to see a shortfall in their capital.

Unit trusts can also be used to provide monthly income. Although most funds only pay out income half yearly, many larger unit trust companies, such as M&G, offer packages combining six of their funds so that a monthly income payment is produced.

By investing through a personal equity plan, there is also the advantage that income can be obtained tax-free. Starting yields on income unit trusts tend to be lower than on building society accounts but, in the past, income funds have had a good record of producing income growth and capital appreciation in excess of inflation. However, poor stock market conditions over the past three years have reversed that trend.

While many unit trust managers argue that the bottom has probably now been reached and it is a good time to buy unit trusts to enjoy future growth as the stock market recovers, investors must be aware of the risks.

Investment bonds offered by insurance companies also provide monthly withdrawal facilities. However, most bonds are designed to provide capital growth rather than income so investors should be particularly wary if they want to avoid eating into capital.

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NET CAR %	5.28%	5.10%
NET %	5.16%	4.98%

Full terms and conditions are available on request. GROSS - Applied rate for interest payable when interest is not required to be deducted. NET - Applied rate of interest payable after allowing for the deduction of income tax at the basic rate. Non-residents may receive interest on demand. CAR (Compound Annual Rate) - This is the Gross or Net rate adjusted to take account of interest applied during the year resulting in the account and itself earning interest. Rates subject to variation but correct at time of going to press.

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estimates the year's net of costs per cent after charges.

Before you look to your future, look to our past.

Conversions take cheer out of credit card shopping

BY LIZ DOLAN

STEPHEN MARKESON

CROSS Channel shoppers, keen to stock up on Christmas food and drink, are now able to take advantage of relaxed rules governing the amount of wine and spirits they can bring back to Britain.

Restrictions will not be lifted officially until January 1, but Customs officers privately admit they are turning a blind eye to people bringing back more than the official limit.

However, there is no absolute guarantee of immunity except at Southampton, where restrictions have been removed. Next year, everyone will be able to bring up to 90 litres of wine through Customs: even those carrying more will probably get away with it, as long as they can prove it is all for their own consumption.

People who intend to use credit cards to pay for their purchases will have other problems to consider. The beneficial effect of falling interest rates is good news, but mercurial exchange rate fluctuations and shrinking interest-free credit periods, must also be taken into account.

Few people are likely to be as spectacularly unlucky as Keith and Jean Clough of Abingdon, Oxfordshire, who travelled by ferry to and from The Netherlands just as the pound was making its swift exit from the European exchange-rate mechanism last month.

Mr Clough says two payments totalling £37.57 made on the outward trip on September 8 had increased to £42.57 by the time they were included on the couple's Girobank Visa statement — a 13.3 per cent mark-up. Payments made on the return journey, two days before Black Wednesday, September 16, increased from £52.86 to £61.37.

The Cloughs sailed with



Victims of Black Wednesday: Keith and Jean Clough

Stena BV, a Dutch subsidiary of the Swedish Stena company, which also owns Sealink. Although the ferry quoted prices in sterling and guilders, the Visa slip was made out in guilders.

The couple would have lost even more on the transactions had they been sailing with one of the ferry companies that charge in sterling and then convert into their native currency. The money then has to be reconverted to sterling by

Visa, making a total of three currency conversions.

On all but two of the Sealink ferries travelling to France and Ireland, transactions are made in sterling throughout. The two exceptions are French-managed ships operating from Dover, which charge credit card customers in francs.

As always, Christmas shoppers should make credit card purchases as near as possible to the statement date to take

advantage of up to 56 days' free credit. However, Save & Prosper appears to be the sole remaining card issuer to allow all customers the luxury of interest-free credit right up to the statement date, regardless of whether the total bill is cleared in one payment. The others, including the four leading English and two big Scottish clearers, now charge interest from transaction dates unless the account is cleared in full each month.

Cardholders who wish to avoid interest charges should take care when writing out the payment cheque to avoid suffering the same fate as one reader. He accidentally wrote a cheque for £212.14 instead of £214.12, the amount appearing on his statement. The £1.98 deficit attracted a hefty £9.67 interest charge. Girobank subsequently waived the charge, but such sympathetic treatment is not automatic.

Save & Prosper's monthly interest rate is 1.69 per cent if customers pay the £8 annual fee, or 1.9 per cent if they do not. Anyone likely to carry a running balance of more than £317 a year is advised to pay the fee to take advantage of the lower rate.

Barclays has just reduced monthly interest charges on credit cards to 1.79 per cent. New, lower rates announced this week by National Westminster range from 1.5 to 1.9 per cent, depending on the type of card.

The Credit Card Research Group, whose members include all big card issuers except Save & Prosper, claims more meaningful comparisons between rates charged by different companies should soon be possible, thanks to an agreement to regularise how annual percentage rates are calculated. Barclaycard and the Halifax are already using the new method: the rest will fall into line over the next few months.

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Payout perils ahead for investment trusts

BY SARA MCCONNELL

SOME high yielding investment trusts that were sold to investors wanting income are struggling to maintain dividend payouts and their position will get worse next year, County NatWest, the analyst, says in its investment trust annual published this week.

The report, put together by Hamish Buchan, Robin Angus and other analysts at County NatWest, says: "The outlook for trust dividends is heavily overcast and getting darker with each month that passes. Most trusts derive the great bulk of their distributable income from UK equity dividends and these are currently falling, not just in real terms, but in absolute terms as well."

So far, trusts have escaped the worst because they are still paying dividends earned in

1991 and early 1992. But the "lag effect", which has worked to their advantage so far, will turn against them in 1993. It goes on: "Some of the higher yielding trusts, particularly the newer ones which lack significant revenue reserves and so have to live from hand to mouth, could feel the strain in the year ahead. The danger for them is that, by cranking up their portfolio yields yet further, they will mortgage the future to stay afloat today."

Many of the newer trusts have set themselves "unrealistically high yield targets" and some are stuck with paying out yields of more than 10 per cent. "This cannot continue during times like these without an unacceptable degree of erosion of their capital base," County NatWest analysts are also worried that many high



Warning note: Robin Angus, left, and Hamish Buchan

yielding trusts are held through personal equity plans. Unrealistically high yield targets make a decline in the net asset value of the trust "all but inevitable in times like these".

High income trusts named as having "weak" dividend paying power include City Merchants High Yield, Fleming High Income and Touche Renmant. High Income County NatWest analysts believe these may be in a "highly pressured category if present trends continue".

Income shares trusts with weak dividend paying power include Derby, Save & Prosper Linked and M&G Dual and Second Dual. These trusts are vulnerable because they do not have any revenue reserves. Derby has already cut its dividend, while the other three depend entirely on the underlying rate of income from the other managed funds in which they invest.

There are also some split capital and quasi split capital trusts which could find themselves using up capital to pay

dividends. Gartmore's Value and Sphere Trusts could have a problem with this. Split capital trusts invest in different classes of share, some of which aim to produce capital growth and some structured to provide income.

Larger and more well established trusts investing in a diverse range of stocks should not give "cause for undue concern" because they mostly have substantial revenue reserves which they can use to pay dividends if their investments do not perform, the report says. All the "big ten" trusts, which include Foreign & Colonial and Anglo & Overseas, would be able to fund a 5 per cent dividend increase from reserves for three years, assuming maintained earnings.

The report tells investment trust boards not be afraid to cut dividends if the previous level proves unsustainable. Better, still, they should be cautious about the level of dividend they set in the first place.

BRIEFINGS

THE Royal College of Nursing has set up a helpline on 0277 234199 for nurses who have come under pressure from insurance salesmen to transfer out of the NHS superannuation pension scheme and into a personal pension. A personal pension is unlikely to offer an inflation-

proofed pension based on salary as the NHS scheme does. This is the second time the RCN has set up such a helpline. Last time, the line received 10,000 calls.

Thornion Unit Managers has launched the Thornion Dresner European Bond Trust. The bond is aimed at investors wanting both income and capital growth and will invest in European government debt and other interest bearing securities. There is a 1 per cent discount on the 5 per cent initial charge until November 30, 1992. The minimum lump sum investment is £500.

Solicitors working with the Camden Citizens Advice Bureau Service in London will draw up wills free. The service is an independent charity operating four bureaux in north London. It suggests £30 be donated to the charity for each will drawn up. A list of participating solicitors can be obtained from the Will Line on 071 483 1860.

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INTEREST RATES ROUNDUP

Bank	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary Dep A/c	2.03	2.06	1.18
Fixed Term Deposits	2.03	2.06	1.18
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

HIGH INTEREST CHEQUE ACCOUNTS

Bank	Rate	Term	Notes
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

BUILDING SOCIETIES

Society	Rate	Term	Notes
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Product	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary A/c	2.03	2.06	1.18
Fixed Term Deposits	2.03	2.06	1.18
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Product	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary A/c	2.03	2.06	1.18
Fixed Term Deposits	2.03	2.06	1.18
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

Compiled by KAREN BUCKLEY

LARGER LOANS

Product	Rate	Term	Notes
Ordinary A/c	2.03	2.06	1.18
Fixed Term Deposits	2.03	2.06	1.18
Barclays	2.03	2.06	1.18
Lloyds	2.03	2.06	1.18
Midland	2.03	2.06	1.18
NatWest	2.03	2.06	1.18

Source: The Equitable Life, Financial Information Providers 070 88482

Paying the price for health cover

From J. E. Read. Sir, Apropos Mr Connelly's letter (October 17) re rises in health premiums, I could not agree more. At 67, my WPA premium rose from £520 in 1991 to £770 in 1992 and £961 to mid-1993 (with two small claims).

In spite of five requests for explanations and asking for a forecast for 1994, I have still not had a satisfactory reply except for nine reminders for me to renew my subscription. I have, in consequence, changed to another company. On the same theme, my mother-in-law paid £700 subscription to PPP in April, and died in May. PPP will not give us a refund.

So much for "health insurance"! Yours truly, J. E. READ, The Old Manor House, The Green, Brasted, Kent.

From Mr Robert Douglas. Sir, I have been a Bupa subscriber since 1959, and have recently resigned, not just because of the huge increase in fees but also because Bupa do not pay out as they did on claims.

A final point, Mr Connelly (October 17) may have overlooked the fact that Bupa



penalises subscribers over the age of 65. Yours faithfully, ROBERT M. DOUGLAS, Fernwood, 247 Forest Road, Old Woodhouse, Leicestershire.

From Mr D. Peter Smith. Sir, Mr Connelly's complaint (October 17) about Bupa insurance premiums is not without solution. People in his position can subscribe to The Exeter Hospital Aid Society scheme that is a full health insurance scheme for which the premiums do not go up with age and are substantially cheaper than Bupa. In Mr Connelly's case, I

Leasehold reform

From Mr Peter Banks. Sir, The fundamental mistake in the letter from Mrs Patricia Loder Dyer (Weekend Money, October 10) is that she asks us to agree that no borrower should be forced to pay back his debt.

The true relationship between a leaseholder and his landlord is that of a borrower to a lender. The tenant has borrowed the landlord's house or flat, the rent is interest only on its value. The capital sum of the loan is the capital value of the property which goes back to the landlord at the end of the lease.

Mrs Loder Dyer is seeking to acquire that capital value at less than its true worth. Her proposals are not leasehold reform; they are leasehold reform asking to manage on a bargain into which they have entered. It is true that in 1947, based on the hardship of poor miners in South Wales, Parliament gave long-term tenants of flats houses and flats rights to buy or extend their leases.

The well advised, rich, and frequently well connected leaseholders of Chelsea, Kensington, Belgrave and similar areas are not, generally, in need of such handouts. But that is what Mrs Loder Dyer and her friends are asking for: the consequent losses which would be suffered by landlords, great and small, would diminish the honour of Parliament, destroy the value of the lease contract, and should cause reasonable legislators to throw out the proposals for the proposed retrospective reform of the law.

The possibility of windfall gains, mainly to those who knew, and know, exactly the borrower/lender relationship of landlord/tenant are the driving force behind these proposals. That they seek breach of contract without social justification or proper compensation should make Mrs Loder Dyer's proposals unacceptable. Yours faithfully, PETER BANKS, 35 Westleigh Avenue, SW15.

Swift reply

From J. T. Hughes. Sir, As one quick to complain, I feel that it is only fair to try to publicise through your columns a recent experience.

The other Friday, I sent a withdrawal form to my C&G building society postal account, catching the midday collection. At 9 am the following Monday, my cheque arrived. This service, over a weekend, could hardly be bettered. All credit to both The Post Office and C&G. It is only ironic for C&G that the transaction was not to its advantage. Yours faithfully, J. T. HUGHES, Twin Oaks, Oak Farm Lane, Fairseat, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Letters are welcomed, but The Times regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

Independent financial advisers and ethics

From Mr Keith P. Mitchell. Sir, Mr Sutton (Letters, October 10) has been misled by the accurate but wholly misleading observation that Equitable Life do not pay commission. What it does pay is bonuses to its salesmen, many of whom earn in excess of £100,000 per annum, as revealed in recent accounts. Salesmen in any company in any industry are paid by results, and Equitable Life is no different in this respect to its competitors. Only the name has been changed, to the confusion of the innocent.

Equitable Life is, on the whole, a company we independent financial advisers would be happy to recommend. The reason we cannot is not "... of course because it doesn't pay commission..." It is because it does not use IFAs as a distribution channel. We have to give best advice to our clients. We therefore need

Xtra details

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No	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	Linton Park	Industrial	1.00
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3	National Power	Electricity	1.00
4	Bevered Barton	Building, Rts	1.00
5	Lloyd Thompson	Insurance	1.00
6	Morgan Cole	Industrial	1.00
7	Vodafone	Telecom	1.00
8	ADT	Security	1.00
9	Brown & Tassie	Industrial	1.00
10	Westminster	Industrial	1.00
11	Yorkshire W.	Water	1.00
12	Thames Water	Water	1.00
13	Sherrwood	Drugs, Rts	1.00
14	LWT CP	Leisure	1.00
15	Hunting	Industrial	1.00
16	Staples	Office, Ctr	1.00
17	Building Rts	Industrial	1.00
18	MIM	Industrial	1.00
19	Brit. Films	Building, Rts	1.00
20	Laird	Industrial	1.00
21	Nitin Foods	Food	1.00
22	Barnett	Office, Ctr	1.00
23	Law Service	Legal	1.00
24	School	Industrial	1.00
25	BICC	Industrial	1.00
26	Staples (Wm)	Industrial	1.00
27	London Elect	Electricity	1.00
28	Yorkshire W.	Water	1.00
29	Lloyd Abbey	Insurance	1.00
30	Thames	Water	1.00
31	AAH	Industrial	1.00
32	BBT Owl	Business Serv	1.00
33	Westbury	Building, Rts	1.00
34	Queens Mount	Hotel, Ctr	1.00
35	Prop Security	Property	1.00
36	Orford Inc	Industrial	1.00
37	Carden Comm	Leisure	1.00
38	Arjo Wiggins	Paper, Print	1.00
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40	Banks	Office, Ctr	1.00

£1,000 MATCH THE SHARES
If you have ticked off your eight shares in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53272 between 10.00am and 5.30pm (see the Sunday Times for full details).

Mr B Munslow of Leatherhead, Surrey was the winner of yesterday's Portfolio Plus Prize of £2,000.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 1992

FT-SE VOLUMES									
Adm	4,400	Carlton Com	532	Land Secs	1,400	Soc Hydro	143	Scott & New	6,004
Adm-Ltd	1,600	Catsville	939	Legal & Gen	300	Scott & New	6,004	Scott & New	6,004
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Christopher Irvine looks at the showman stepping on to centre stage in rugby league's World Cup final

The burning desire for perfection that inspires Offiah

THE name is Nigerian and is pronounced "Off-ear". It still niggles him that he is more usually called "Off-fire" — except that it sounds good, makes a good headline and is exceedingly good marketing sense. It also happens to sum up the man and his scorching talent. Martin Offiah's sense of insecurity, not just with his name, drives him, like many great sportsmen, in the race for perfection.

With Offiah, life has one meaning — tries, tries, and tries again. In five years as a professional, he has scored 283. His place in rugby league's annals is assured yet the feeling that he has to prove himself each time on the pitch remains overwhelming. It is also his inspiration.

Early on, there was a swaggering disregard for anything other than appearing flash. The extravagant displays of celebration — the hip swaying, the gospel hallelujahs, the wagging finger — are still there, although Offiah, now 26, has matured into a supremely rounded player with his club, Wigan. He is as awesomely strong in defence as when he is high-stepping round flailing tacklers, ball tucked between breast and left forearm.

Offiah says he would probably give up the game if he could no longer score tries but Offiah not scoring tries is as unthinkable as Bradman not scoring runs, so the rage burns on.

Such is Offiah's captivating presence that Wembley without him this afternoon would probably be regarded as a rugby league's greatest occasion to just another international match against Australia. The concern over a strained right hamstring, which cleared up only five days ago, extended from the British management to the marketing men, who might as well have sold the event as the Martin Offiah World Cup final. As the game's most marketable commodity, Offiah has learned to encourage the phonetic "Charlies of Fire" image — flames licking at his winged heels.

Today, Britain know that, unless their forwards can gain possession and momentum at the rucks for the ball to find its way into Offiah's hands on the left flank, the

chances of them regaining the World Cup after 20 years are remote. "You are talking of someone so wonderfully gifted, so very, very fast — 5.6sec over 50 metres — he can literally win a match for you. You can't do without him," Malcolm Reilly, the Britain coach, said.

The single-minded will and fiercely independent spirit of Offiah was fostered from the age of 12 at Woolverstone Hall boarding school in Suffolk. He was sent there from home in Hackney by his father, a barrister then working in Nigeria. His cricket ability caught the eye of Graham Gooch early on. After a couple of matches bowling for the Essex second XI, Offiah found his pace more suited to rugby union, first at Ipswich and then on the wing at Rosslyn Park.

His speed, eye for the main

You are talking of someone so wonderfully gifted, so very, very fast, he can literally win a match for you. You can't do without him

chance and ability to shake free of a tackle earned him an invitation from the Barbarians but he was looked on as one-dimensional and too much of a showman. During one of his last appearances for Rosslyn Park, against Gloucester, he weaved his way behind his 22-metre line, veered left and then abruptly right, all the way to the opposition corner flag. "Bloody fool," a committee man bellowed at him. After a similar show of extravagance at the Middlesex Sevens, Offiah began to receive calls from Doug Laughton, then coach at Widnes rugby league club.

Laughton's joy is fishing for union talent and in Offiah he saw his biggest catch — the greatest pace and desire to get across the tryline. Offiah, his sights set on joining Bath, did not share Laughton's confidence. "My first reaction was to say no," he said. "I had

seen league on television a couple of times but Doug kept insisting. Yes, being a professional sportsman appealed but, although I wanted success, I wouldn't really have put too much money on it."

Offiah took Laughton's faith on to the field. His first game for Widnes against Halifax went well enough; on his third appearance, he scored against Runcorn Highfield.

Then the floodgates opened. In his debut season of 1987-8, he beat Frank Myler's club try-scoring record with 42, surpassing that with 58 the following year. He has been the first division's leading try-scorer for the last four years and he was the fastest to 100 first division tries.

The first of his 26 international appearances came only six months after he had arrived at Naughton Park when, inevitably, he scored a try in victory against France in Avignon in January 1988. His five tries against France last year at Leeds is a British international record. In two spells in Australia, he scored 20 tries in the exciting Winfield Cup competition.

"Rugby League is a confidence game," Offiah said. "A lot of players converting from union find it difficult the first year but I found my feet straight away. I enjoyed being flashy in the first couple of years. I found that I could outpace most defences. I built up my strength purely for that purpose. As long as I didn't miss any tackles or make serious blunders, I felt happy just scoring tries. I have evolved, though. I am more creative for others and work for the team in general but the raps still come from tries."

This desire to score never wanes and Offiah remains immersed in rugby league to the exclusion of almost all else. Life in a four-bedroom detached house in Widnes does not have the bustle he likes about London. He still regards himself as an outsider but prefers it that way. His relationship with Ellery Hanley, the former Britain captain and teammate this afternoon, is about his closest.

It perhaps explains an earlier reluctance to speak to the media. However, these days Offiah appreciates his considerable worth — his

income comfortably exceeds £100,000-a-year with various contracts — and he is involved in the marketing business in a part-time role with Norweb, Wigan's sponsor.

Nothing frustrates him more than not playing. This season has been the worst because of injury. He has scored only three tries in six matches. During the six months he was absent before Widnes finally agreed to sell him to Wigan for a world record fee of £440,000 in January last year.

Offiah was helplessly frustrated. He relieved that with 30 tries in five months, including ten against Leeds in the Premiership Trophy semi-final.

Since his move to Central Park, John Monie's influence on Offiah has been considerable. The wily Australian coach has smoothed out the rough edges. Offiah's assurance under the high ball, running from dummy half and covering abilities are aspects Monie has painstakingly developed. He has failed to curb the

regrettable frustration a perfectionist suffers at those who may not share his dedication.

Australia fear Offiah more than any of the British today for the simple reason that he thinks precisely as they do. He knows he is the best and goes flat out to show it. In the last nine matches against Australia, Offiah has scored five tries, including one in the 19-12 win at Wembley in 1990. That memory, and two tries against Castleford in the Challenge Cup final in May, are a powerful elixir

for a repeat on the grandest of stages. The bookmakers agree, making him the 7-1 favourite to score the first try.

"The big time is what I enjoy most. That, and tries, there is no greater kick... I need to score. If you channel that desire and use your talent, you can't really fail to succeed," he said. A world record crowd at Wembley of over 70,000, united in demanding that he be given the ball, provide a fitting stage today.



ILLUSTRATION: STEVE MASON

IN BRIEF

'Reward' denied by TVNZ

New Zealand cricket authorities yesterday moved to calm complaints from Pakistan that included a threat to cancel a tour later this year.

Peter McDermott, the chairman of the New Zealand board, sent a message to the Pakistan authorities explaining that reports of a £350 "reward" for television cameramen who spot Pakistani bowlers tampering with the ball had been taken out of context. TVNZ said reports of the reward "had no basis of truth".

Turkish delight

Triathlon: After a hard season, Spencer Smith, of Britain, the world junior champion, rose to the occasion once more in the Alanya International in Turkey, winning in 1hr 50min 00sec.

Team on the mat

Judo: Two of Britain's Olympic medal-winners, Nicola Fairbrother and Kate Howey, bolster an inexperienced squad at the European team championships in Leonding, Austria, this weekend.

Faldo trails

Golf: Nick Faldo shot a second-round 70, for a 141 total, and is nine off the lead in the Bridgestone Open in Chiba, Japan.

Off course

Motor rallying: The second Paris-Cape Town Rally has been called off due to security problems in southern Africa. The event will revert to the Paris-Dakar route and start on January 1.

Shuttle flight

Badminton: Anders Nielsen, the English national champion, has gained a free trip to the China, Hong Kong and Thailand Opens next month as a result of winning the European Masters circuit title last season.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Britain must deal with pack's power

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

SENTIMENT and an overwhelming desire are motivation enough for Great Britain in the World Cup final at Wembley today. Neither, however, can cover up a suspect glass jaw if exposed to the quick and punishing driving of the bigger Australian forwards, all the passion Wembley can generate is unlikely to prevent a knockout blow.

Final preparations by Britain yesterday emphasised the two areas where they could upset Australia, 11-4 on favourites and seeking their fourth successive Cup final victory. As their one win of the summer's series on a wet Melbourne evening showed, a patient build-up, with kick-and-chase tactics and distribution out wide to Martin Offiah, can untread the tightest pack defence.

Subduing the Australian pack — over a stone per man heavier — holds the key. This has to be the foremost objective of the props, Andy Platt and the recalled Kevin Ward, the oldest player this afternoon, at 35. There is insufficient weight behind these two to allow for levity.

Australia's dominance of the ruck area in winning the series against Britain in Brisbane in July underlined this fact. Fourteen of the 17 players

WEMBLEY TEAM			
Great Britain		Australia	
J Lydon (Wigan)	1 Full back	T Braithwaite (Bathurst)	1
A Hunte (St Helens)	2 Right wing	W Carne (Brisbane)	2
G Connolly (St Helens)	3 Right centre	S Renouf (Brisbane)	3
G Schofield* (Leeds)	4 Left centre	M Mervin* (Brisbane)	4
M Offiah (Wigan)	5 Left wing	M Hancock (Brisbane)	5
S Edwards (Wigan)	6 Stand-off	B Fittler (Penrith)	6
D Fox (Bradford M)	7 Scrum half	A Langer (Brisbane)	7
K Ward (St Helens)	8 Prop	G Lazarus (Brisbane)	8
M Dermott (Wigan)	9 Hooker	S Walters (Canberra)	9
A Platt (Wigan)	10 Prop	M Sargent (Newcastle)	10
D Betts (Wigan)	11 Second row	P Stronin (Bathurst)	11
P Clarke (Wigan)	12 Second row	B Lindner (Wests)	12
E Hanley (Leeds)	13 Loose forward	B Clyde (Canberra)	13
*Captain		*Captain	
Replacements: 14, J Devereux (Widnes); 15, K Skerrett (Widnes); 16, A Tait (Leeds); 17, R Byrnes (Widnes)		Replacements: 14, J Cunningham (Widnes); 15, D Gillespie (Wests); 16, S Jones (Brisbane); 17, K Williams (Brisbane)	

used that night are back today.

The bulk and size that Malcolm Reilly, the Great Britain coach, said was so necessary remains unavailable.

Route one would appear the best option, with Garry Schofield, the captain, and Gary Connolly, in the centre, running at Steve Renouf and

Mal Meninga, wonderful attacking threequarters, but seen as defensively vulnerable.

Derek Fox, at scrum half, with Shaun Edwards up in support, will look to his boot to keep the opposition pinned down. A lesson from Britain's three wins in 18 attempts in the past ten years is that the Australian forwards do not like having to retreat. "It's our real chance to get the wing men flying," Fox said.

Offiah, on the left wing, is Great Britain's match-winner, but Australia have several. If allowed to roam wide, Bradley Clyde could run Ellery Hanley ragged at loose forward, while the elusive Allan Langer heads a quartet of Brisbane backs with strength, speed and attacking breadth.

Schofield's hope, expressed last night, that Australia will be intimidated by the atmosphere of 70,000 people at Wembley is a vain one. Australia lost there in 1990 because of their lack of preparation, something they have not been guilty of this time.

While the sides are level on 52 wins each, recent times have been less than generous to Great Britain. The third, and last, of their World Cup triumphs was in 1972 in France, when they drew 10-10 with Australia after extra time. Wembley is as good a place as any to reverse the trend.

SNOOKER

Griffiths reaches semi-finals

By PHIL YATES

TERRY Griffiths, up to fourth on the provisional world ranking list as a result of a remarkable high level of consistency over the past two seasons, reached the semi-finals of the Rothmans grand prix at The Hexagon, Reading, yesterday with a 5-2 victory over his fellow Welshman, Mark Bennett.

Griffiths, 45, is not immune to the pressure felt by many of his fading contemporaries but he has maintained and even improved his position in the game's upper echelons by successfully controlling his nerves at the table. A cue to this could lie in his start to life as a professional.

"They say that the pressure involved in today's game is intense but it's no more than when I started," Griffiths, who turned professional in 1978, said.

"Then there were only two tournaments a year and, if you didn't do well in them, you had no living and no money." Griffiths, beaten by Bennett in three of their previous four meetings, was held to 2-2 but won the fifth frame on the pink. He added a 79 break, easily his highest of a disjointed contest, to extend his lead to 4-2 and a long pink in the seventh secured a best-of-17 frame meeting against Ken Doherty or Steve Davis.

Alan McManus, claimed that financial considerations were secondary after beating Nigel Bond 5-3. McManus, who made breaks of 83, 77, 44 and 34 as he recovered from a 3-1 interval deficit, said: "If I had to choose between the trophy and the £80,000 first prize, I think I would take the trophy. Winning a big tournament means everything at the moment."

McManus, seventh on the provisional rankings, awaits the winner of the Jimmy White-Neal Foulds quarter-final.

RESULTS: Quarter-finals: A. McManus (Scot) 4-1 N. Bond (Eng); S. G. Griffiths (Wales) 4-1 M. Bennett (Wales); 5-2.

CRICKET

Zimbabwe build on solid foundations

ZIMBABWE, with a rewarding first Test match safely behind them, are to intensify efforts to develop cricket among the country's ten million blacks. A first-class domestic programme will also start next year. These plans are essential if the game is to survive here, according to David Houghton, the Zimbabwe captain.

Houghton has a realistic vision of the future which is also as forthright as his own strokeplay. Referring to the Test match with India at the Harare Sports Club, which finished on Thursday, he said: "This is white cricket and it will die in ten years if we do not get the blacks to play. I want to tell you very sincerely that the day 11 blacks play for Zimbabwe in front of 40,000 others at the Chitungwiza township here, that will be a real Test match for our country."

Houghton has spent most of his career doubling as main Zimbabwe batsman and national coach, and is only too conscious that the white population, presently 75,000, continues to dwindle.

In a reshuffle by the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU), Houghton has been put in charge of age-group coaching. His most immediate assignment is to look after the Zimbabwe under-24 team, which competes soon in a new South African provincial event.

The most significant development yet for black players has been the selection, on merit, of three of them for an under-19 tournament in South Africa next December. Both these competitions underline the beneficial knock-on effect for Zimbabwe that South Africa's return to the International Cricket Council (ICC) has had.

It is not clear who will be the next Test visitors here after the present tours by India and New Zealand, but it will always make sense for sides to use Zimbabwe as a staging post on their way to South Africa, as India have

The newest Test-playing nation is encouraging growth at grass-roots level. Richard Streeton reports from Harare

done this time. Zimbabwe are spared finding their guests' travelling expenses and the visitors have the chance to break their journey and practice.

Meanwhile, the ZCU is laying more concrete pitches at high-density primary schools in rural areas. As promising players are found, the best are awarded cricket scholarships to leading schools in Harare. These retain the best facilities from the past, but now black pupils are predominant. A cricket academy to hone emerging talent is also being built.

Peter Chingoka, the ZCU president, hopes that six teams will compete in the three or four-day first-class programme being planned. The present domestic fixtures comprise a senior league with eight clubs and a one-day competition between five regional teams. In similar fashion to domestic Sri Lankan cricket, it would take time before any strength in depth emerged.

The present visits by India and New Zealand, who arrived on Thursday night, are costing the ZCU about £80,000. Chingoka said the money was being raised from sponsors. World Cup receipts and borrowings from the development fund. The ZCU's income would increase as cricket interest grew. Zimbabwe had only had three months to organise the present tours, and marketing had barely begun.

Tomorrow, the state-owned television service is, for the first time, filming throughout the one-day international against India, with an eye to overseas sales. India travel to South Africa on Monday to start a three-month tour. New Zealand's fixtures here include a Test match and a one-day international.

Grimsby put Beasant in firing line for Newcastle

By Louise Taylor

TWO months on from being Chelsea's first-choice goalkeeper, and two years after acting as Peter Shilton's World Cup understudy in Italy, Dave Beasant yesterday joined Grimsby on a month's loan.

Beasant makes his debut at Newcastle United, one of his former clubs, this afternoon when he aims to prevent Kevin Keegan's side securing a twelfth successive first division win at a packed St James' Park.

Beasant's arrival at Blundell Park came after six weeks spent in Chelsea's reserves. Publicly castigated by Ian Porterfield, the Chelsea manager, following a series of blunders in a 3-2 home defeat to Norwich, Beasant, 32, was informed he would never play for the first team again.

He played 20 games for Newcastle in 1988 after arriving from Wimbledon in the June and leaving for Chelsea the following January. Alan Buckley, the Grimsby manager, who was without the suspended Wilmot and injured Sherwood, yesterday said: "I am very pleased to have signed Dave Beasant." With Wilmot very much the first choice at Blundell Park, a permanent move is not under discussion.

John Byrne was last night finalising the details of a £275,000 transfer which will take him from Sunderland to Millwall. The clubs agreed the fee a year to the day after the Republic of Ireland international forward signed for Sun-

Newmarket on course to continue Cup run

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

THE FA Cup has shouldered its way into the sporting life of the headquarters of racing, with Newmarket Town galloping into the fourth qualifying round for the first time in their 115-year history. Tomorrow, the Jewson Eastern Counties League club plays Hayes, of the Diadora League premier division, at its Crickfield Road ground for a place in the first round proper.

The club's connection with the racing industry extends no further than its nickname, "the Jockeys", which conjures an image of 4ft 10in centre halves and thus is little used in the dressing room according to the club captain, Martin Morris. "We do get quite a lot of stable lads, many of them from the North, who come to midweek matches," Morris said.

Morris, 31, is well placed to judge his club's progress, having joined as a 16-year-old and been away for only two years. He remembers playing at Hayes in a 5-0 defeat in a second qualifying round replay in 1980. "I've served under six different managers," he said. "When I was first here we used to change under the old stand but we now have new changing rooms and a new clubhouse."

He believes that the standard in the Jewson League has been rising, "after a slight dip for a couple of years", as professional clubs have cut their staffs and more players have drifted in to non-league football. The management team of Peter Graham and Dave Pinkowski has strengthened the side. Newmarket reached the last 32 of the FA Vase last season and have dispatched Langford, Tilbury, Baldock Town and Grays in the FA Cup this season. They are also unbeaten in the league, though have played only five matches.

Morris has been briefed on Hayes by Jim Hicks, who spent last season with Newmarket but now plays for St Albans, who beat Hayes 3-2 in the second qualifying round of the FA Trophy last Saturday. "We haven't looked at them," Morris said. "We've just got to play our own game but we know they have a good record in the Cup." Hayes have reached the first round for the past six seasons and, in the past two, have beaten Cardiff City and Fulham.

"If there is one person I want to win the game for it is Brian Manning," Morris said. "He's been manager, assistant manager, everything and is now the physiotherapist. He's one of those characters all players love because he's been around so long."

Newmarket, who last Saturday beat Harwich and Parkeston before a crowd of 102, expect to draw between 600 and 700 for their big day.

Souness passing a test of tradition

David Miller on a manager who says principles should not be sacrificed on the altar of success

Important clubs that dominate domestic football and win trophies shape the national game. Team managers shape those clubs. What Graeme Souness, a Scot, thinks and does will therefore help shape English football.

For the moment, Souness is concerned with maintaining Liverpool's long-standing eminence, in particular their climb back towards a more accustomed position in the league and continuation in the European Cup Winners' Cup.

Their storm-lashed performance against Spartak in Moscow on Thursday night was simultaneously one of the most commendable and one of the most bizarre in their history. Here was entertainment run wild.

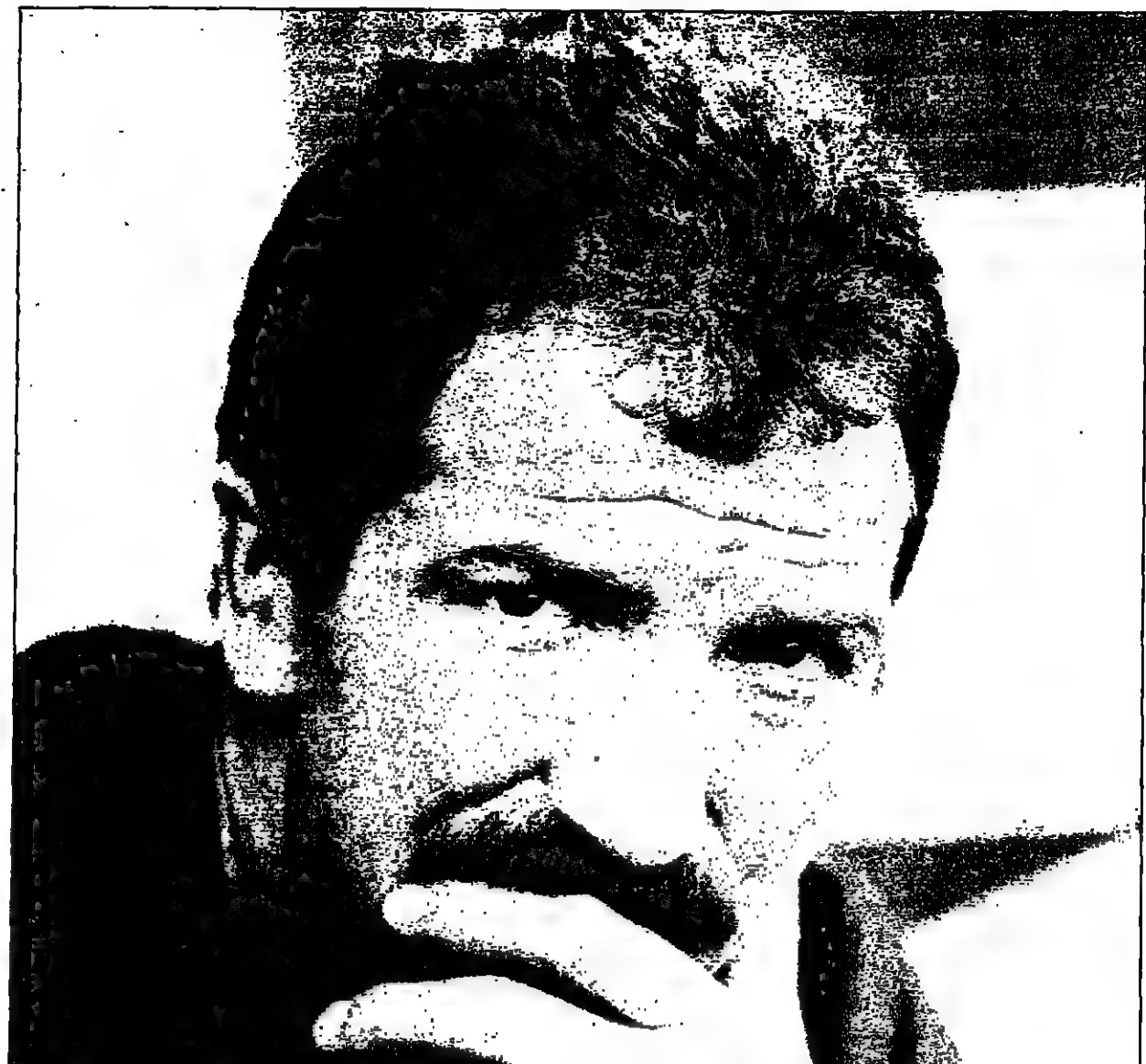
Yet Souness, an exceptional midfielder player of the Seventies for Scotland and Liverpool, has broader concerns. "I worry for our game," he says, "though I love it more than ever, even if I'm having a difficult time."

Only further radical alteration to the laws, he considers, can protect the British game's future from the present expedient preference for kick-and-rush, an extreme reverse of Arthur Rowe's push-and-run of 40 years ago. "It now starts even in the schools," Souness says. "Hoof it, back it up, and pick up the bits from the opposition's errors. If Liverpool played that way, the spectators would stop coming. Whether I succeed or fail, we'll do it by the way we always have."

Although it may be possible for a club to win the Premier League by kick-and-rush, Souness argues that those who now dominate European club competition and the World Cup — the Germans, Italians, Argentines and Dutch — are successful the way English clubs were when rosters of the European Cup, during the prime of Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. And remember that Alf Ramsey used to insist that the essence of the game was accurate passing.

Souness's answer, in order to dissipate the present compression of play into small areas and restore attacking potential, would be two-fold: the offside law to be operated only beyond an extension of the 18-yard line, to make the playing area longer, and an increase in the width of the goal by a yard.

It is no coincidence, he says, that the countries which play a passing game, such as Italy



Souness: "Whether I succeed or fail, we'll do it by the way we always have"

and Germany, are those operating the sweeper system, which makes the playing area deeper. He blames the FA for much of the present English emphasis. "Coaching the long-ball tactics is an easy option," he says.

His coaching at Anfield is very much mental rather than physical or tactical, and he is firmly of the opinion that his team is not challenging at the top of the Premier League — Liverpool aim to move up by beating Norwich City at Anfield tomorrow — wholly because of a nightmare run of injuries: a run that continued with Steve Nicol's late withdrawal from the match in Moscow.

Some critics allege Souness has changed the club's style and method of training. He denies this. It is no different, under the supervision of Ronnie Moran and Roy Evans, than when he was a player, he insists. The legend of the Boot Room lives on.

"In my day, the players were left more to their own devices," he says. "Now they need more help. I talk more, and I don't think they get injured talking." Souness is injured talking. Souness is injured to discuss the regime of Kenny Dalglish, but is of the

opinion that the squad he inherited was done in, finished. The desire and hunger were gone, he claims, and to turn things round was going to be a harder job than any manager had faced since Shankly.

His job has been to change the mood as well as the personnel. He suspects that what drove Dalglish away was that the players were no longer listening. "In the old days," he reflects, "the players were schooled in the correct habits. And in the build-up to matches, and at half-time, it was the experienced players who sorted things out — even with Bob Paisley, though that is not to discredit him, because he brought the players to the club."

One of the difficulties, Souness says, is that while in former times players such as Kennedy, McDermott or Johnston would spend some months in the reserves, acquiring the feel of the club, before being pitched into the first team. Today, expensive players have to go straight into the side.

"I knew all this when I walked in the door," he admits. "With Rangers in Glas-

gow, they'd had little success, and they were prepared to listen: don't go to the pub on Thursdays, don't eat this or that. At Anfield, they thought they knew everything, they'd been successful with their ways. It was harder to tell them."

Souness feels mentally stronger than ever, relishing the hard times, discovering more about himself and others in a way that does not happen when success is rolling. "Team spirit, it is often said, is what you develop from winning and not vice versa. He is aware that some players are looking at him under the glare of personal criticism, that former colleagues are taking cheap shots.

Physically, he thinks he can ride it. He has put back two stone lost at the time of his bypass operation, and has only a slight shortage of breath as the aftermath of a concurrent lung infection. The offence caused to the Merseyside public by giving his surgical "story" to *The Sun* is, he admits, the worst error of his career. He excuses himself, thinly, by saying that everyone facing the operation considers at some point that

they may be among the 3 per cent not to survive. The proceeds were donated to Alder Hey Children's Hospital at West Derby.

On Thursday night, in freezing rain, the performance of Bruce Grobbelaar, precipitated by the commendable passing-back law, was enough to make anybody's heart miss a beat.

Grobbelaar's impulsive histrionics, rushing wildly out of the penalty area, had nearly conceded a goal in the first half, and did so in the second when he foolishly switched the ball from right foot to left, miskicking to concede Spartak's second goal, scored by Carpin.

The dive of desperation at Radchenko's feet, for which Grobbelaar was sent off and from which Spartak regained the lead with six minutes remaining, was the 20-80 decision that all goalkeepers have to make and referees, unawares, have to judge. My opinion is that there was no option either for Grobbelaar to go for the ball with little hope, or for the referee, Larsson, of Sweden, to send him off. The law is there to benefit attackers, and Liverpool paid the penalty.

Gavin and Watts head GB challenge

By Stephen Slater

THE Brands Hatch circuit in Kent will this weekend attract over 160 young racing drivers from around the world, focusing their attention on the Duckhams Formula Ford Festival.

This year marks the 21st anniversary of the event, which has traditionally been the first opportunity to identify motor racing's stars of the future.

Seven previous festival winners have gone on from the 1600cc racing cars to Formula One, including the team Lotus driver, Johnny Herbert. Such is the quality of the entry for the 1992 event that at least a dozen young drivers have a chance of success.

The first hurdle is surviving a tough three-day format of qualifying races which select the 24 drivers for the crucial final round.

Favourites are certain to include Jan Magnussen, of Denmark, and the Australians, Neil Cunningham and Russell Ingall, who were among the fastest drivers in testing.

British honours will be upheld by Oliver Gavin, who has moved back to Formula Ford for the weekend after driving more powerful Vauxhall Lotus cars and Derek Watts.

A poignant moment this weekend will be when the 21-year-old Swiss driver, Philippe Siffert, takes to the Brands Hatch track for the first time.

His father, Jo Siffert, won his first Grand Prix at Brands Hatch in 1968 and was killed there at the wheel of a BRM in 1971, in the year of Philippe's birth.

Derek Warwick, recent winner of the world sports car championship, will replace Michele Alboreto in the Footwork Formula One team in 1993, the team confirmed yesterday.

YACHTING

Steel cuts a dash on way to Rio

By Barry Pickthall

WITH less than 500 miles to the finish at Rio de Janeiro of the first stage of the British Steel Challenge round-the-world race, Richard Tudor and his crew on British Steel II are making a final dash to secure line honours.

At 1400 GMT yesterday, they were within 423 miles of the Brazilian port, speeding along at 9.6 knots, having pulled out an 82-mile lead over the second-placed yacht, Interspray, during the previous 24 hours, after Paul Jeffes and the crew on Interspray experienced light winds closer inshore.

Adrian Donovan's third-placed yacht, Haul Insured, has also been slowed, dropping 132 miles, as a result of British Steel and being clocked doing just 4.3 knots by BT's satellite tracking system yesterday.

Even so, the race remains remarkably close. During the past 30 days, half the ten-strong fleet of identical 67-foot yachts have held the lead.

LEADING POSITIONS at 1400 hours GMT yesterday, with miles to Rio de Janeiro: 1. British Steel (UK), 423 miles; 2. Interspray (UK), 341 miles; 3. Haul Insured (UK), 211 miles; 4. Team Teesdale (UK), 203 miles.

SCHOOLS SPORT

Sedbergh make breakthrough

By Chris Dighton

SEDBERGH, in Cumbria, became the first school to score a try against the seemingly invincible Durham this season, though they were still beaten 31-22.

Durham have a roll of about only 280 boys, but they were unbeaten at first- and second-team level throughout last season and have so far repeated the pattern this term.

Sedbergh's try might have led to a rare defeat for Durham, had it not been for a daring piece of counter-attacking. Sedbergh were leading 22-21 and on the verge of scoring a second try when Durham ripped the ball free, exchanged three passes behind their line and broke away to score at the other end.

The Sedbergh second team, also lost narrowly. They led Durham seconds 11-5 with

five minutes to go, but conceded three tries in as many minutes to lose 26-11.

The master in charge of rugby at Durham, Nick Willings, said: "Our tour of South Africa gave us a flying start to the season and 19 of the boys who went on that trip are back with the school."

"There is a terrific amount of confidence among the boys and the new rules have made the game quicker, which has helped us. Sedbergh came out of their blocks at us and it was a testing battle. Our toughest battle looks to be against Ampleforth on November 14," he said.

Sevens, in Kent, take on Durham on Monday, in the second of two games in their half-term tour of the north. Coached by Mike Williams, who also looks after the Eng-

land 18 group, Sevens have drawn their past two matches 10-10. The first game, against Whitgift of Croydon, involved a meeting of the England youth management, as Whitgift are coached by Chris Kibble, who takes charge of the England 16 group.

Sevens, who drew with Campton a few days later, will play Barnard Castle in the first game of their short tour, for the British Rail 125 trophy, which has been held by the host club for the past two seasons.

A crowd of 3,000 is expected for the 104th meeting between Llandovery College and Christ College, Brecon at Llandovery in Wales this weekend. Llandovery are unbeaten this season. Christ College have won five out of seven.

Matchday guide to the Premier League

Arsenal v Everton

Arsenal, who won the corresponding fixture 4-2 last year, Wright scoring all four, are unchanged for the third consecutive time and unbeaten in their last six outings. With Wright, keen to keep his England place, up front for Arsenal and Beardsley, resigned to never getting his back, in Everton's attack this could turn into a tale of two strikers. Smith could return to Everton's defence after two years of struggle to overcome serious injury, but Ribault and Johnson are almost certainly ruled out of the attack.

Blackburn v Man Utd

A lack of goals has been United's principal problem this season and their manager could do without a reminder from Alan Shearer, the forward he so badly wanted but lost, of what might have been by adding to his tally of 15 goals. More than the Blackburn defender who had ten years at Old Trafford, will want to prevent his old team increasing their goal haul. United, protecting a lead, match unbeaten run, are once again without the injured Robson but

Darren Ferguson, the manager's son, resumes in the midfield.

Coventry v Chelsea

Coventry, the 6ft 4in forward from West Bromwich, with a view to a move, begins on the bench. Wise is doubtful for Chelsea so Allan is poised to make a rare appearance in attack. Spectator is still struggling with strain, but Le Saou could make his first appearance.

Ipswich v C Palace

Clive Baker, Ipswich's reserve goalkeeper, makes his full home debut in place of the suspended Foster. Whitton is restored to the right of the midfield after a lengthy injury lay-off. Milton is also fit again and back in the squad. Thomas, Ipswich's former England international, is likely to be on the bench for the second successive match. Palace seek their second League win of the season.

Liverpool v Norwich

Humiliated 7-1 by Blackburn Rovers in their last visit to the north west,

name an unchanged side, but groin strains mislead and a knee extremely doubtful for Liverpool. On the plus side, Jones and Stewart are expected to play with Rosenfield ready to replace Rush. Only Souness knows if he will persist with Grobbelaar in goal after his antics in Moscow on Thursday.

Man City v Soton

Le Tissier returns to the Southampton wing after a minor ankle operation while Dixon and Bangor are also expected to be fit to join him in an attack which must break down one of Britain's costliest defences featuring £2.5 million signings in Curle and Philan.

Middlesbrough v Sheff Wed

With injuries still rife, Kewenagh, 18, makes his home debut for Middlesbrough after a promising appearance at Forest. Wednesday goalkeeper Hirst and Jamson, both injured.

Oldham v Aston Villa

Earl Barrett will be back at Boundary Park for the first time since his move

from Oldham to Villa Park in February. Small is in line for a first team place as Villa aim to extend their unbeaten run to nine games. Marshall, Oldham's converted winger, is still troubled by a thigh injury and sits this one out while Farrell, 20, a winger, is included in the Villa squad for the first time.

QPR v Leeds

Andy Sinton hopes to push his case for an England place, if he passes a late fitness test for QPR, who have Ferdinand in to replace Cantona and are expected to be fit to start for Leeds, but the French forwards' place could be stolen by Wallace, who hopes to start his first game in seven weeks. Luke continues in goal despite his midweek aberration against the other Rangers at Boro.

Sheff Utd v Nottm For

Beauzamy makes the debut at Bramall Lane where Forest need to translate pretty passes into three points if they are to dislodge themselves from the foot of the table. Glover starts his first game of the season for Forest in place of Bannister. Charles, the right

back, has recovered from a knee problem in time to keep his place today. United will recall Tracey in goal if Kelly fails a fitness test. Hodge could replace the injured Rogers in the midfield.

Wimbledon v Tottenham

Joe Kinner, the Wimbledon manager and a former Tottenham player, hopes to mark Wimbledon's first live televised appearance for four years with a win. Holdsworth returns after a month's absence recovering from a knee operation, but might have to settle for warming the bench as Cotterill, who scored twice last week, should retain his place up front. Blackwell is also back after injury and competes with McLeary, signed on loan from Millwall this week, to join Scales in central defence. Scales should be fit to keep goal. Mabbutt plays his first League game of the season for Tottenham alongside Huddock at centre half, leaving Curdy in the cold. Tottenham have fitness doubts about Sherringham, Anderton and Austin.

Compiled by Louise Taylor.

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

WORLD SERIES: Atlanta Braves 7, Toronto Blue Jays 2 (Toronto lead best-of-seven series 3-2).

BOXING

EPERNAY, France: European cruiserweight championship. Alain Teller (Fr.) defeats Angel (Eng), 12-10, in 10 rounds. VERBANA, Italy: European middleweight championship. Sumbu Kalambay (L. Hol.) defeats Sene-Che (Sen), 12-10, in 12 rounds. BETHNAL GREEN: WBC International light-middleweight championship (12 rounds). Curle (US) vs Tony Collins (Nasby), 12-70, in 12 rounds.

CRICKET

SHEFFIELD SHIELD: Brisbane Western Australia 370 (D. Martyn 133 not out, G. R. Marsh 121) and 184 (Martyn 112, S. Blore 55); Queensland 221 (G. A. Reid 4-58) and 60-1.

FOOTBALL

Late results on Thursday: INTERNATIONAL MATCH: Croatia 3, Mexico 2 (90 mins). UEFA CUP: Second round, first legs: Tottenham 2, Feyenoord 0; Real Zaragoza 0, Turin 1; Dynamo Moscow 0, FC Bayern 1. FA Trophy: Second qualifying round, Rochdale 2, Histon 1 (aet). FOOTBALL LEAGUE: First division: Nottingham Forest 3, Bolton 1. Second division: Nottm Forest 3, Bolton 1. Third division: Nottm Forest 3, Bolton 1. Fourth division: Nottm Forest 3, Bolton 1.

GOLF

THE BELFRY: Schneider seniors' team

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE PLAYOFFS: Hartford Whalers 5, Ottawa Senators 1; Vancouver Canucks 4, Philadelphia Flyers 4; Pittsburgh Penguins 3, Detroit Red Wings 6; Toronto Maple Leafs 5, Tampa Bay Lightning 2; Minnesota North Stars 5, Quebec Nordiques 2; New Jersey Devils 5, Chicago Blackhawks 5; Boston Bruins 4, Calgary Flames 2.

ICE SKATING

ATLANTA: State America: Men (after

RUGBY UNION

SCHOOLS MATCHES: Daily Mail Under-18 Cup: Cornwall away: First: Truro 39, Richard Lander 5; Devon Cup: Kelly College 20, Burners 17. Other matches: Chesham 15-40, Rugby Town 7; KCS Winterton 15-20, KCS Long 10; Tauris 35, Tauris 10; Whitgift 10, Christ's Hospital 6; Windsor 32, Bedford 0; Pals' central derby: West 52, Saracens 49; 1st XV: 1st XV (Eng) vs 2nd XV (Eng), 15-10; 2nd XV (Eng) vs 3rd XV (Eng), 15-10; 3rd XV (Eng) vs 4th XV (Eng), 15-10; 4th XV (Eng) vs 5th XV (Eng), 15-10; 5th XV (Eng) vs 6th XV (Eng), 15-10; 6th XV (Eng) vs 7th XV (Eng), 15-10; 7th XV (Eng) vs 8th XV (Eng), 15-10; 8th XV (Eng) vs 9th XV (Eng), 15-10; 9th XV (Eng) vs 10th XV (Eng), 15-10; 10th XV (Eng) vs 11th XV (Eng), 15-10; 11th XV (Eng) vs 12th XV (Eng), 15-10; 12th XV (Eng) vs 13th XV (Eng), 15-10; 13th XV (Eng) vs 14th XV (Eng), 15-10; 14th XV (Eng) vs 15th XV (Eng), 15-10; 15th XV (Eng) vs 16th XV (Eng), 15-10; 16th XV (Eng) vs 17th XV (Eng), 15-10; 17th XV (Eng) vs 18th XV (Eng), 15-10; 18th XV (Eng) vs 19th XV (Eng), 15-10; 19th XV (Eng) vs 20th XV (Eng), 15-10; 20th XV (Eng) vs 21st XV (Eng), 15-10; 21st XV (Eng) vs 22nd XV (Eng), 15-10; 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SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 1992

United wary of visit to Ewood Park

Ferguson fears Shearer in Rovers' revival

By Louise Taylor

ALEX Ferguson's worst fears today probably involve Alan Shearer scoring a hat-trick and Kevin Moran shining in defence for Blackburn Rovers against Manchester United at Ewood Park.

Ferguson, the United manager, cast his net in Shearer's direction more than a year ago but months of well-plotted pursuit were undone when the England forward opted to move from Southampton to Blackburn.

If a £3.6 million transfer could ever be described as a snip it would be Shearer's. He has already scored 15 goals while Ferguson has watched his attack labour to deliver the finishing touch. A win against United this afternoon would put Rovers two points ahead of Norwich City at the top of the Premier League.

This morning, United are sixth. It was a lack of goals which cost them the League title last season, and although they are unbeaten in ten games this term, they have drawn the last four and won only one of the past eight. Defeat today would leave them eight points adrift of Rovers, who embarrassed Norwich — who play Liverpool at Anfield tomorrow — 7-1 in their last League home match.

United's defence will be tested by not only Shearer but also by Stuart Ripley, who has created many goals for his new partner since his own £1.2

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	12	2	2	2	20	20	26
Sheff Wed	12	7	1	2	24	9	25
Coventry	12	6	4	2	15	11	22
Aston Villa	12	5	5	2	20	14	20
QPR	12	5	5	2	18	12	20
Manchester U	12	5	5	2	14	10	20
Arsenal	12	5	2	4	15	12	20
Leeds	12	4	5	3	22	17	17
Middlesbrough	12	4	4	4	21	17	16
Ipswich	12	3	7	2	17	16	16
Chelsea	12	4	4	4	18	16	16
Sheff Wed	12	4	3	5	15	15	15
Oldham	12	3	5	4	20	21	14
Manchester C	12	3	4	5	13	13	13
Everton	12	3	4	5	11	14	13
Liverpool	12	3	4	5	16	20	13
Sheff Utd	12	3	3	6	12	12	12
Sunderland	12	3	3	6	11	16	11
Tottenham	12	2	5	5	11	21	11
Wimbledon	12	2	4	6	18	20	10
Crystal Palace	12	1	7	4	15	19	10
Nottingham	12	2	3	7	11	22	9

million close season move from Middlesbrough.

Back in their Ayresome Park days, Ripley frequently gave Gary Pallister, the United central defender, a torrid time in training. If Ripley can continue to be so consistently impressive on the wing, he could well come into contention for a reunion with Pallister in the England squad.

After spending ten years at United in the central defensive position now occupied by Pallister, Kevin Moran was released by Ferguson and discovered a new lease of life at Blackburn. At 36, Moran has been attracting rave reviews this season and would enjoy proving a point by shacking Ferguson's attack in his first league match against his former club. Looking forward to

the occasion he said: "You live for big games like this at this stage of your career."

"Alex Ferguson let me go at a time when, like Gordon Strachan, I had a lot of football left in me. But there is no bitterness. I do not resent it. Playing in games like this for Blackburn is as exciting for me as Gordon's role with Leeds must be for him. It means more later in your career."

Just as Moran's Indian summer has confounded the doubters, so Blackburn's rise to the top of the Premier League was far from expected. As Ferguson said: "Blackburn have surprised everyone with their terrific form so far, but they deserve to be where they are at the moment. Although we have not been winning games, no one has been beating us either."

In the days when Kenny Dalglish, the Rovers manager, was in charge of Liverpool, he enjoyed a prickly relationship with Ferguson. It will be interesting to see what effect re-kindling a historic rivalry between United and Rovers, who last met in a league fixture more than 25 years ago, has on the pair.

The halcyon era of Lancashire derbies between the two teams was 80 years ago, when Rovers and United each won the title twice in seven seasons before the first world war. It was a time when the Lancashire cotton industry was thriving and teams ran down the aptly-named Tapestry Street adjacent to Ewood Park.

Subscribing to the theory that history is bunk, Dalglish said: "Those days are gone, it is only tomorrow that counts."

For Bryan Robson, the United captain, his tomorrow as a player seems to be running out. He has yet again failed to recover from injury in time to take part in a fixture he would relish. However, Ferguson's son, Darren, is fit to return to the United midfield.

Robson will be one of thousands of interested spectators on a day when Ewood Park will be packed to the rafters. As Dalglish said: "United are a great club with great traditions. Wherever they go they have the same pulling power as Liverpool — everyone wants to see them."

And Shearer.



Flawless show: Graf, the No. 1 seed, in dominant form in her quarter-final against McNeil at Brighton yesterday

Huber and Graf turn on the style

By Andrew Longmore, Tennis Correspondent

GERMANY, in the form of Anke Huber and Steffi Graf, lost a total of six games and took less than two hours to reach the semi-finals of the Midland Bank championship in Brighton yesterday.

Graf and Huber, who live within half an hour of each other in southern Germany, now meet in a private affair to decide their national representative for the final tomorrow.

The odds clearly favour Graf, the top seed and defending champion. Huber has won an average of three games in each of the three matches against her Federation Cup-winning partner and the chances of breaking parity today, by her own assessment, owe more to hope than expectation, particularly as she is troubled by an ankle injury.

"It is very difficult. Steffi plays so fast and has such a good serve. I have never played well against her, this time. I hope to play a little better, though nobody thinks I can win. We will see," Huber

said after a 6-3, 6-1 quarter-final victory over Pascale Paradis-Mangon, of France. It was hardly optimistic.

Huber won the first four games in double-quick time — Graf the first eight off Lori McNeil — and, though Paradis-Mangon recovered briefly to take the next three, that was the nearest the French girl came to *egalite*.

A run of seven games won by Huber — from 4-3 in the first set to 5-0 in the second — suggested that lengthy treatment to the left ankle midway through the first set was purely a precautionary measure and the German finished the rout off with a flourish, leaving the baseline for once to execute a swift and precise serve and volley.

Inevitably, because she comes from the same area and has worked with the same coach, Huber has been shadowed by Graf. She is only 17, but has risen into the top 20 quickly enough to invite the comparison. Her forehead,

though, which begins with the face of the racket parallel to the ground, owes nothing to Graf or the coaching manuals. Paradis-Mangon will testify to its efficiency but the pundits feel that the technical weakness of the stroke will stop Huber from reaching Graf's heights.

"I have always played that way," she said.

Graf's first set in a 6-0, 6-2 victory was almost flawless, a stream of backhand passes and heavy first serves reducing McNeil, the No. 8 seed, to despair. The second set was only marginally less convincing. McNeil, a winner of the grass court title just down the coast at Eastbourne in mid-summer, had not beaten Graf in seven matches. Yesterday, she never threatened to stem the flow of defeats.

Graf had spent a few moments prior to the match perusing a record of her career, compiled by the loyal local fan club. She was surprised how few players had a

positive head-to-head record against her, even more surprised by the identity of two of them: One is Jo Durie, who leads the series 4-3, and the other Shelley Wolcott, who had the distinction of beating the future Wimbledon champion in a satellite in their one and only encounter at Sutton Coldfield eight years ago. Both are English.

□ **Hong Kong:** Ivan Lendl reached the semi-finals of the Marlboro Championships here yesterday, despite losing his last preliminary round match to Michael Stich, of Germany.

Stich won 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, as Lendl was totally out of touch. But it was Stich and the Australian, Todd Woodbridge, who went out of the exhibition tournament, as Lendl had conceded fewer sets than his rivals in group two.

Lendl now meets the Dutchman, Richard Krajicek, while Michael Chang will face Goran Prpic in the other semi-final. (AP)

Feherty finds his form again

By Our Sports Staff

DAVID Feherty, who has been struggling for form this year, reverted to his former self to score a sparkling 65 in the second round of the Iberia Madrid Open yesterday.

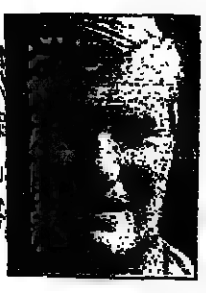
The Ryder Cup player from Ulster, who goes into today's third round on an eight-under-par total of 136, a shot behind Colin Montgomerie, who scored 69, and Miguel Angel Jimenez, who returned a blistering 64, is in 83rd place in the order of merit with nine days of the season left.

"I lost my confidence early on and didn't play enough to get it back," Feherty said. "Then I played too much, but now I feel like I'm going to hole some putts again — as opposed to wondering which side I was going to miss on." Feherty covered the back nine in 34, rattled off four successive birdies from the 2nd and put the gloss on his best day's work for ages by pitching dead on the 300-yard 8th.

Feherty, 33, hoped it was a taste of things to come because he desperately wants to retain his Ryder Cup place next year and is also trying for an US PGA Tour card again. "It will be my fifth attempt," he said. "I enquired about going this year, but was told I would have to go through three stages. I'm going to play with people wearing jeans and with holes in their shoes."

□ **Malaga:** won his first Tour title in Belgium last month and today birdied four of the last five holes. "He holed putts like nothing on earth," Montgomerie said. "I thought I was exceptional, but I had nothing on him today. I had loads of chances, but didn't take them."

LEADING SECOND-ROUND SCORES (65 and no holes shot): 135: C Montgomerie (68, 67); 136: D Feherty (71, 65); 137: J Richardson (69, 68); S Tomlinson (67, 70); D Goss (68, 69); M Lumsden (69, 68); J Caruana (69, 71); 138: S Lumsden (69, 69); 139: B Falvey (71, 67); M Macdonald (72, 68); M Ross (69, 70); 140: D Clark (71, 70); P McNeil (72, 68); S Tinning (70, 71); 141: M Samson (69, 72); 142: J Singh (69, 72); 143: P Hask (71, 72); 144: A Murray (69, 75); 145: J Brown (71, 74); 146: K Walters (70, 74); 147: J Jones (71, 74); 148: J Brown (71, 74); 149: J Brown (71, 74); 150: J Brown (71, 74); 151: J Brown (71, 74); 152: J Brown (71, 74); 153: J Brown (71, 74); 154: J Brown (71, 74); 155: J Brown (71, 74); 156: J Brown (71, 74); 157: J Brown (71, 74); 158: J Brown (71, 74); 159: J Brown (71, 74); 160: J Brown (71, 74); 161: J Brown (71, 74); 162: J Brown (71, 74); 163: J Brown (71, 74); 164: J Brown (71, 74); 165: J Brown (71, 74); 166: J Brown (71, 74); 167: J Brown (71, 74); 168: J Brown (71, 74); 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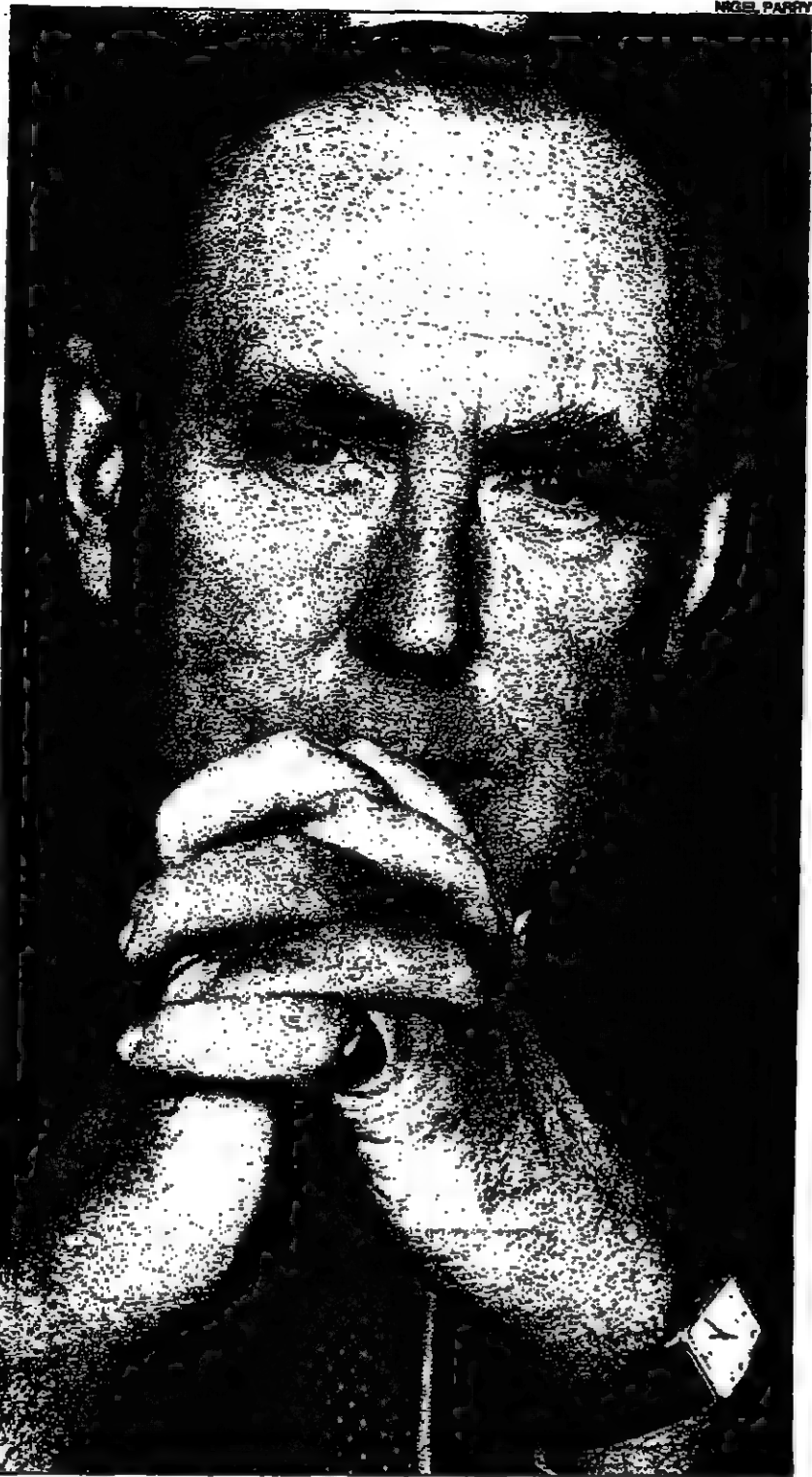
WEEKEND

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Our patrician priest of pleasure

Will his love of churches give our new heritage secretary, Peter Brooke, divine inspiration? By Valerie Grove



Guardian of our past: the book-loving Peter Brooke, left, already owns Wordsworth's Dove Cottage in Lakeland, above

Can it be only five months since I sat on this same sofa in this same room facing David Mellor, glowing with post-election euphoria? A presidential sub-editor headed my interview. "Happy days are here for David Mellor, Secretary of State for Sport, the arts, fine buildings, the national lottery and all the good things in life. Nothing can possibly go wrong — or can it?"

Well, it is a funny old world. The spring sunshine has gone with Mr Mellor. Autumn leaves are falling, threatening to take the government with them. Nobody is calling the Department of National Heritage the Ministry of Fun any more, and in its palatial temporary office is the "civilised" Peter Brooke, with rich, plummy voice and eyebrows beetling.

In May, it had seemed fine to talk about lavish plans to build new buildings for the millennium, and a national lottery to help the arts. "None of that changes, technically," Mr Brooke says. "The legislation should get through the House by next summer, and the lottery will be up and running in '94."

But hasn't the mood changed?

"In relation to the lottery, or the mood of the nation?"

"Isn't it inappropriate even to discuss the ethos of the lottery in the context of so many people's financial catastrophe?"

"Whether people wish to take part in the lottery is obviously a matter for them as individuals. Life goes on. And we're talking about 1994 rather than 1992. None of us knows what the climate will be."

So let us pretend that Heritage will emerge unscathed from the recession: it is Mr Brooke's department's job to look after "the ways people spend their time when they're not working", meaning leisure rather than unemployment. And in Mr Brooke our heritage has a thoroughly traditional guardian. He even owns a slice of it — Dove Cottage, the most visited of Wordsworth's Lakeland homes.

His great-grandfather Skjoford Brooke, a clergyman, bought it in 1890. And the Wordsworth Trust is a model for the leisure industry, building a museum from an 18th-century barn, turning a hotel into a library, and buying up 15 nearby cottages, where American and Japanese scholars can be housed, along with young people who go there to be trained for other arts and heritage jobs.

"We also own 80 per cent of the major Wordsworth manuscripts, which for a private trust is an astonishing dowry," he says.

"Churches" and "conservation" are Mr Brooke's chief interests in *Who's Who*. He keeps Bejman's Parish Churches of England &

Wales (Collins, first edition 1958) in his car, and once initiated a three-week correspondence in *The Times* about the problem of locked churches. What he loves about churches is the 800 years of evolving architecture, their ecclesiastical eccentricities and what Philip Larkin once described as the sense of their having been used by good people over centuries. "That has a significance which conveys itself even to someone like Larkin who was not a believer."

He once took Brian Walden, an Oxford contemporary, church-watching. "Considering how far to the left Brian was then, and that my father was in a Conservative cabinet, I was always astonished that Brian was prepared to come and stay with me, as he did frequently."

Indeed all Mr Brooke's interests seem to be informed by useful personal connections, in the classic fashion of the Tory patrician. When we spoke of sport, and the parous

state of British tennis, a game he plays, he said: "Miss Wade and my sister were exact contemporaries reading the same subject at Sussex." By mentioning connections he deflects inquiries about minefields in his portfolio. He will consider Sir David Calcutt's report on press freedom, but believes a free press to be crucial ("John Wilkes lived in my constituency"), and to dent it would be dangerous.

Interestingly, when he was president of the junior common room at Balliol in 1953, the JCR censured the British press for "making the private life of Princess Margaret headline news". The men of Balliol voted to ban offending papers and to treble their order for *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* "in appreciation of their discretion".

"We behaved in a fairly pompous manner," Mr Brooke remembers, "and a sharply corrective

editorial in the *Daily Mirror* said we were being absurd. But I received about 100 letters from the public, 97 in favour. I've got the letters somewhere. I'm a fantastic hoarder."

He will have to deal with Baroness Warnock's critical report on the Royal Opera House which stands "on the brink of a financial abyss just when the government is least able to give it a hand" (David Mellor in *The Guardian* last week). Mr Brooke mentions that he was a contemporary of Jeremy Isaacs at Oxford "so I've known him all my life". Doubtless he has close friends at the BBC, to steer him through the forthcoming debate about its Charter renewal as well.

He learnt the art of political legerdemain at his parents' knees, as the son of Henry Brooke (Lord Brooke of Cumnor), Home Secretary to Macmillan, an Ulsterman by ancestry, and Dame Barbara (Baroness Brooke of Ystradfellte).

long-serving vice-president of the Tory party. "The first married couple in 701 years of parliamentary history ever to sit on the front bench together". He waited until they had both left the parliamentary scene before entering the Commons himself at 42. While seeking a seat, he was interviewed for the safe Huntingdon constituency along with one John Major.

Mr Major rightly turned down his resignation from the Northern Ireland job after "the television episode" which he still regrets. In January this year, when the IRA had murdered seven civilians in county Down, Mr Brooke appeared on RTE's live *Late Late Show* in Dublin, and was persuaded — lured by the cunning Gay Byrne asking him about the death of his first wife — to sing "My Darling Clementine". He acknowledged the error and apologised to the Commons.

"What was very moving," Mr Brooke says, "was that I was totally conscious of the effect in Northern Ireland after the event, and my wife and I [he married his second wife, Lindsay in 1990] spent our first wedding anniversary visiting every single one of the families. They are a warm, welcoming, courageous people."

While Northern Ireland was essentially a single problem, Heritage embraces at least six strands, so he will have to ration himself from too much attention to things he likes, such as cricket, about which he is omniscient ("I once dreamt of being a cricket correspondent"). In his first week at

Heritage he found himself at Leeds sculpture park opening the Igor Mitoraj exhibition, followed by Opera North's performance of *La Duenna*. He does go, "not voraciously", to opera; he was at Glyndebourne two nights before it shut down.

He is MP to almost all of London's commercial theatreland, but the play he longs to see is Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* at the National. I supposed he could get tickets easily but he says he would never pull strings. "Although I must confess that since my namesake without an 'e' [Peter Brook the director] sounds the same over the telephone, my secretary has sometimes rung on behalf of Mr Peter Brooke and seats have been available." He'd had a very nice letter from Peter Brook, actually, from Paris.

He is a picture buyer, never paying more than £50, and a book collector. "My young have asked me, 'Why do you go on buying books? You'll never have time to read them all, however long you live.' And I reply that it is a library. Once, my youngest son had to rush back to write an essay on New

Year's Day, because an absolutely critical book was on the closed shelves of the university library. I said 'try me'."

The book was Dinsmore's *Greek Classical Architecture* and of course he had it. "I think it was an eye-opener to him that it was on the open shelves of his own home."

This is a style of Tory that has all but vanished from the party. When his guard is down he is a raring good raconteur; his speeches are elegant and witty; and his new colleagues report that he has a mind like a trap.

As he has to make speeches about "building a Britain of opportunity and enterprise for the 1990s" and "improving the quality of life" he will need all his eloquence, in a dismal world where jobs themselves have become a lottery.

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On the piste again, nudge nudge, geddit?

While you can ski and have an affair, most don't, honestly

Autumn is the season when a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of skiing. In a recent episode of *Cheers* Sam tried to con Diane into believing he was going to his aunt's funeral, and the only thing that gave the game away was that the hypothetical dead relative lived in Vermont.

But why should he have to lie about going on a skiing weekend? He could be perfectly open about going off to play baseball or football. The answer is that skiing has become synonymous with sex, especially illicit or extra-marital sex. So you have to lie about it.

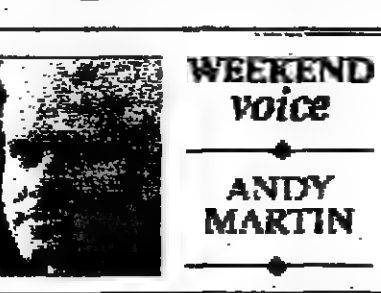
Like other common illusions, this wonderful fallacy can sometimes be inconvenient. In the days when I was reporting on the so-called "white circus" of the World Cup downhill, following the pro skiing circuit all winter up and down enough mountains to reach to the moon, my life was nothing but a succession of skiing weekends. Admittedly rather long weekends, from around Thursday often till Tuesday. I could never convince my wife I wasn't just having a good (i.e. bad) time, even though the reality was more like a mobile monastery than a scraggle, more hair shirts than silk sheets.

There has already been a solid fall this year: noiselessly fluttering to earth through the night, winner

holiday brochures have been snowing down across the land. I never once saw a women's race, since competitive skiing keeps the sexes puritanically apart, not just in separate hotels but usually in different countries as well. The glossy fantasies of the brochures, in contrast, proclaim that things are otherwise among the amateurs.

Most photographs and resort blurbs are psychedelic exercises in innuendo, promising romance on the rocks. Solo operators merge into couples, couples coalesce into full-scale orgies. This is pornography with your clothes on. Roland Barthes in his essay on striptease in *Mythologies* argues that taking your clothes off divests you of sexuality; conversely, the more clothes the sexier, even the snowiest with voluptuous curves in veils of Gore-tex.

It will be said that even ads for ice-cream (not to mention shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant) manage to equate their product with passion and enhanced pulling power. But the perverse identification of a pair of parallel skis with a pair of intersecting bodies long predates high-pressure type.



A carving on a cave wall in northwest Russia, around the White Sea, circa 1000 BC, shows three naked men in elongated footgear. They are so plainly naked that they are usually known as the "three phallic figures on skis". Winter temperatures in these parts can drop as low as -40C. This premonitory image of the perfect package holiday can be perceived as art for art's sake, allegory, wishful thinking, or sympathetic magic. The one thing it surely can't be is a naturalistic portrayal of everyday experience.

None of which is to say that it is impossible to go skiing and have a fling simultaneously. But these quite distinct activities are only automatically coupled in the collective imagination — and in a ramifying genre of books and plays and films whose titles typically involve some puerile play on the word *piste* — where French ski instructors and English chalet girls eternally act out simplistic sexual scenarios. Even cocktails bear out the connection. In a bar in Chamonix you can order an Orgasm (milk and rum and Coke, I recall).

For a while I assumed the explanation for this phenomenon must lie in the symbolism of downward motion. Mountain climbers, hauling themselves heavenwards in quest of God (many early mountaineers were churchmen), embodied the elevated aspirations of the higher families. Skiers, on the other hand, with salopettes for fig leaves, were endlessly rehearsing the script of the Fall, sliding down towards sin and perdition.

Mountaineering was all muscular Christianity on the march; skiing was pure pagan hedonism in a cold climate. We talk about falling in love as if we were giving way to some powerful force of nature. Similarly, in skiing, we feel the pull of gravity sucking us down like fate.

But there is another key component of these slippery semantics. In an ancient episode of the *Dick Van Dyke Show* Dick goes off on a skiing weekend. On his return Mary has prepared a candle-lit dinner for two and is dressed in a seductive negligee. He tries to cool her ardour, but she soon sniffs out his guilty secret: under his clothes he is bandaged up like an Egyptian mummy, for all practical purposes rendered impotent.

This is the Darwinian dimension of skiing: natural selection according to your ability to get down black slopes in one piece. Sex or death. Ski right and you score; blow it, break a leg or your neck, and your chances of reproduction are zero.

But what makes skiing irresistible to our post-modern mentality, easily bewitched by the simulacrum, by signifiers without substance, is its strong Lamarckian undertow. Lamarck believed that acquired characteristics can be inherited, so that a dog that had its tail cut off would breed dogs with shorter tails. And so it is with skiing. You don't have to be born with boots on, you can buy them. And you can look like a skier even if you can't ski like one. What is transmitted to the next generation is the suntan and the right shades. Hence the iron law of evolution: the survival of the slickest.

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THEATRE

LONDON

ARTISTS AND ADMIRERS: Ostrovsky's sharp, affectionate picture of a theatrical anarchy in Russia circa 1880. Lovely performances by, among others, Syreeta le Touzel and Philip Voss. The Ritz, Barbican Centre, Silk Street, EC2 (071-638 8891). Mon-Thurs, 7.15pm, mat Thurs, 2pm.

LE BARUFFE CHIOZZOTTE: The European Arts Festival starts here with Golden's comedy about fishermen meeting their wives after six months at sea. Presented by the Piccolo Theatre of Milan. In Italian, five performances only. National (Lyttelton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Thurs, Fri, Sat and Mon, Nov 2, 7pm, mat next Sat, 2pm.

IT RAINS IN THE FAMILY: Larks in the hospital common room, matron outraged, doctors flummoxed. Ray Cooney faces with lots of laughs. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (071-839 4401). Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, mat Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 5.30pm.



Steadman in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*

JUNE MOORE: Innocent songwriter conquers Tin Pan Alley. Delightful comedy by Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman. Excellent cast led by Adam Godley and Frank Lazarus. Perfect entertainment to shake the blues away. The Strand, WC2 (071-836 9987). Previews from Thurs, 7.45pm; opens Nov 4, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Wed, Sat, 3pm.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES: Alan Ayckbourn's grimy funny play, set in a suburban garage, where nice suburban people do their best to annihilate each other with niceness. Martin Jarvis and Rosalind Ayres lead the cast. Greenwich, Crooms Hill, SE10 (081-858 7755). Previews from Thurs, 7.45pm; opens Nov 2, 7pm; then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm.

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN: Chita Rivera is the vamp in Harold Prince's production of the Kander & Ebb musical, based on the celebrated play about fantasies in a prison cell. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (071-379 5599). Mon-Sat 8pm, mat Wed, Sat, 3pm.

A LITTLE OLDER: John Binnie's independent award-winning Edinburgh; a chronicle of Glasgow childhood recalled as a man nurses back to strength a woman who has lost her memory. Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (071-722 9224). Previews Tues, 8pm; opens Wed, 7pm; then Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

NO MAN'S LAND: Rare stage appearance by Harold Pinter in his (or are they?) With Paul Edlington. Almeida, Almeida Street, N1 (071-359 4404). Previews from Thurs, 8pm; opens Nov 2, 7pm; then Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

OUR SONG: Peter O'Toole plays a man plunging into an unsuitable love affair (with Tara Fitzgerald). Ned Sherrin directs. Kitz Waterhouse's new play.

Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 5070). Previews from Wed, 8.15pm; opens Nov 3, 7pm; then Mon-Fri, 8.15pm, Sat, 6pm and 8.45pm.

PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME! Brian Friel's affectionate comedy of an Irish emigrant and his carping alter ego. A revival to be cherished. With Jonathan Arun and Brendan Coyle. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-867 1116). Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.15pm, mat Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5pm.

RADIO TIMES: Tony Slattery in a fun trip down Memory Lane, set in wartime Broadcasting House, bursting with sprightly Noel Gay numbers.

Queen's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 5040). Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs, 2.30pm, Sat, 4.30pm.

THE RISE AND FALL OF LITTLE VOICE: Terrific performance by Alison Steadman as the raucous slattern in Jim Cartwright's play about dreams, shyness, horrible mothers and greedy lovers. With Jane Horrocks, and Peter Postlethwaite. Aldwych, Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 6404). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION: Stockard Channing as the rich New Yorker transfixed by a black-on-white play on human inter-dependence. Comedy. Panton Street, SW1 (071-867 1045). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Wed, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: David Thacker's winning revival, thirteenth style, both comic and romantic, delightfully acted—not least by a reproducible mutt. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (071-638 8891). Mon-Thurs, 7.15pm, mat Thurs, 2pm.

REGIONAL
EDINBURGH: British premiere of Michel Tremblay's *The House of the Stars*, where a man reveals his family's log house, and three generations speak of their lives there. Traverse, Cambridge Street (031-228 1404). Opens tonight, 8pm; then Tues-Sun, 8pm.

GLASGOW: The New York-based Wooster Group on a brief visit to Britain show their latest work, *Brace Up!* A deconstructionist spectacle, based on Chekhov's *Three Sisters* and incorporating classical and popular Japanese styles. Tramway, Albert Drive (041-227 5511). Wed-next Sat, 8pm, mat Sun (Nov 1), 4pm.

MANCHESTER: *The Seagull* transposed by Thomas Kilroy to the west of Ireland, where the play fits as if Chekhov wrote it for the place. Bridgland Larmour directs. Contact, Oxford Road (061-274 4400). Previews Wed, 7.30pm; opens Thurs, 7.30pm; then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON: In the main theatre, David Johnson and Clare Higgins star in *Antony and Cleopatra*, directed by John Caird, the last opening of the 1992 season. At the Swan: lust, murder and madness trap Cheryl Campbell and Malcolm Stoddart, playing the guilty pair in Middleton's *The Changeling*. Michael Attenborough directs. And at the Other Place: Richard McCabe plays Marlowe in Peter Whelan's *The School of Night* (second play this year with that title). A fresh look at the mysterious deaths in a Deptford tavern. Royal Shakespeare/Swan/Other Place (0789 295623). *Antony and Cleopatra*: previews from Thurs, 7.30pm; opens Nov 5, 7pm. *The Changeling*: previews from Wed, 7.30pm; opens Nov 3, 7pm. *The School*: previews from Wed, 7.30pm; opens Nov 4, 7pm.



Up to his necks Liverpoolian maverick Julian Cope, offering the old and new on tour

FILM

LES AMANTS DU PONT NEUF (18): Les Carax's hymn to Paris and a punk bum's love for a young agent going blind. In Paris in spirit, and a real movie movie. Excellent. Barbican (071-638 8891). Metro (071-437 0757) Renolr (071-837 8402).

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (11): Sumptuous Disney cartoon fairy-tale, blessed with skilled animation and attractive songs that might have sprung from a Broadway musical. Directors, Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) West End (0426 915574) Screen on Baker Street (071-635 2772) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

BLUE ICE (15): Michael Caine's former MI6 agent plunges into a pool of corruption and intrigue. Tired holism, filmed in London. With Sean Young; director, Russell Mulcahy. MGM Baker Street (071-935 9772) MGM Panton Street (071-930 0631) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER (12): Cheap, witless vampire comedy. Best when it spoofs Californian all-stars. With Kristy Swanson, Donald Sutherland; director, Fran Rubel Kuzliand. MGM Panton Street (071-930 0631) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

1492: CONQUEST OF PARADISE (15): Lashings of action from director Ridley Scott, but not enough dramatic meat. Gérard Depardieu as Columbus; Sigourney Weaver as Queen Isabel. Empire (071-497 9999) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

GAS FOOD LODGING (15): Emotional lives of a waitress and two daughters in New Mexico. Good-looking, well acted. Faruza Gask, Brooke Adams, Jane Skae; director, Allison Lander. Metro (071-437 0757) Renolr (071-837 8402) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772).

HUSBANDS AND WIVES (15): Woody Allen's best film in years, a fascinating tale of collapsing New York marriages. Stars Allen, Mia Farrow, Judy Davis, Liam Neeson, Juliette Lewis. Gate (071-727 4043) Lumiere (071-836 0651) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Screen on the Green (071-226 3520) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

PATRIOT GAMES (15): Harrison Ford's family comes under attack from an IRA cell. Absurd thriller from Tom Clancy's novel. Anne Archer, Patrick Bergin; director, Phillip Noyce. MGM Baker Street (071-935 9772) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

THE PLAYER (15): Dazzling satire on Hollywood, directed by Robert Altman from Michael Tolkin's novel. Tim Robbins as the studio executive who kills a writer; plus games and walk-ons galore. Odeon Mezzanine (0426 915683).

PRAGUE (12): Callow Scott searches for family history in the Czechoslovak film archive. Wispy drama with modest charms from writer-director Ian Seller. With Sandrine Bonnaire. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Minema (071-235 4225).

SPOTSWOOD (15): Gentle, pleasing Australian comedy, with Anthony Hopkins as an efficiency expert battling with an

outdated moccasin factory. Director, Mark Joffe. Plaza (071-497 9999).

STRICTLY BALLROOM (PG): One dancer's fight to defy the rules of the Australian Ballroom Dancing Federation. Excellent. Introducing debut by director Baz Luhrmann. With Paul Mercurio, Tara Moric. MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) West End (0426 915574) Metro (071-437 0757) Renolr (071-837 8402) Screen on the Hill (071-435 3366).

THUNDERHEART (15): FBI agent Val Kilmer rediscovers his Indian heritage in South Dakota. Engrossing thriller from director Michael Apted. Stars Sam Shepard, Graham Greene. MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

UNFORGIVEN (15): Clint Eastwood's mellowed gunman is forced to resurrect his lethal skills. Marvelously resonant, reflective Western. Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman, Richard Harris. Camden Plaza (071-485 2443) Empire (071-497 9999) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Haymarket (071-839 1527) Kensington (0426 914666) Screen on the Green (071-226 3520) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

WHITE MEN CAN'T JUMP (15): Wesley Snipes and Woody Harrelson as basketball rivals in Los Angeles. Fresh, funny American from writer-director Ron Shelton. With Rosie Perez. MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Plaza (071-497 9999) UCI Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

CLASSICAL
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Edgar's stirring cantata *Caractacus*, a portrait of the patriotic and pastoral of the legendary British chieftain, as well as operatic in its musical and dramatic range. Richard Hickox conducts the LSO and the London Symphony Chorus in the powerful and rarely heard music. Judith Howard, Arthur Davies, David Wilson Johnson, Alistair Miles and Stephen Roberts make up a strong team of soloists. Barbican, Silk Street, London EC2 (071-638 8891), tomorrow, 7.30pm.

MEREDITH MONK VOCAL ENSEMBLE: Choreographer, dancer, singer and composer, Meredith Monk straddles the whole spectrum of contemporary avant-garde performance. Nowhere is this more clear than in *Azias*, the opera she recently created for Houston Grand Opera. For its first British tour, her Vocal Ensemble will present the premiere of a concert version of the opera, along with the vocal piece *Facing North*. Monk will also be talking about her work.

Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8800). Thurs, 7.45pm, post concert talk. Bath University, Claverton Down (0225 826777), Fri 8.00pm, pre concert talk at 7pm.

SHOWTIME WITH BRITISH AND WELSH: An adventurous and intriguing programme that brings together excerpts from Britain's *Paul Burry* and *Well's* *Krickelbocker Holiday* and cabaret songs by both composers. The vocal soloists, American soprano and actress Angela Lianou and Australian composer, conductor and singer H.K. Gruber (baritone) — are joined by two pianos, percussion and the BBC singers. Tonight's concert is followed tomorrow afternoon (3pm) by a concert performance of *The Treppany* Opera in a double bill with David Drew's *Songspiel* version of *Well's* *1929 Happy End*. Steuart Bedford conducts the Britten-Pears Orchestra and singers from the Britten-Pears School. Snape Maltings Concert Hall, tonight, 7.30pm; tomorrow, 3pm. Aldeburgh Foundation Box Office (0728 453543).

OPERA
OTELLO: A welcome outing for the Royal Opera House bankers: Elijah Moshinsky's sombre and reliable production; Sir Georg Solti in the pit, Kiril Te Kanawa as Desdemona, Sergel Leiferkus as Iago, and Plácido Domingo repeating his definitive account of the title role. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-240 1066/1911), Fri, 7.30pm.

BLOOD WEDDING: For his first opera, a commission from The Women's Playhouse Trust, the composer Nicola LeFanu has worked with librettist Deborah Levy on an adaptation of Lorca's masterpiece. Taking place in the atmospheric warehouse setting of London's busiest film studio. Costumes are by Nicole Farhi. Anne Harrison conducts. Jacob Street Studios, Mill Street, London SE1 (Credit card booking 071-497 9977), Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, 7.45pm. Further performances to Nov 7.

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY: Rene Lalique and his fellow glassmakers feature in two sessions at Bonhams and one at Sotheby's. As well as a sale of modern commercial seal bottles on Thursday, 1pm, in which he

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WOZZECK: David Pountney's stylishly squalid production of Beig's harrowing drama is revived by English National Opera, with Donald Maxwell in the title role and Kristine Olesinski as Maria. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-836 3161). Thurs, 7.30pm.

ROCK

JULIAN COPE: The Liverpoolian pop maverick, who cut his teeth as lead singer of The Teardrop Explodes, has just released an emotive album, *Jehovahkill*. His tour offers new and old material. University, Bradford (0274 383300), Mon, 7.30pm. Royal Court, Liverpool (051-709 4321), Tues, 7.30pm. Barrowlands, Glasgow (041-552 4601), Wed, 7.30pm. Academy, Manchester (061-275 2930), Thurs, 7.30pm.

METALLICA: Visceral heavy metal from the band with the pared down sound and monster riffs. Wembley Arena, Middlesex (081-500 1234), today and tomorrow, 8.30pm. SSE, Glasgow (041-248 3000), Tues, 6.30pm. Ice Rink, Whiteley Bay (091-252 6240), Wed, 7.30pm. The Point, Dublin (010 3531 363 633), Fri, 7pm.

INSPIRAL CARPETS: Providing an antidote to American grunge, the tuneful indie guitar band have bounced back with a new album, *The Revenge of the Goldfish*. University, Exeter (0392 263528), tomorrow, 7pm. Rock City, Nottingham (0602 412544), Mon, 8pm. Corn Exchange, Cambridge (0223 357851), Tues, 6.45pm. University, Leeds (0532 439071), Thurs, 8.30pm. Brixton Academy, London SW9 (071-326 1022), Fri, 7pm.

JAZZ

HERBIE HANCOCK, TONY WILLIAMS, WAYNE SHORTER: A tribute to Miles Davis featuring three members of his original 1963 quintet plus former jazz Messenger Wallace Roney and bass player Dave Holland. Aldeburgh Festival, SW7 (071-589 8212), Thurs, Fri, 7pm.

DOCKLANDS JAZZ FESTIVAL: An interesting line-up at this year's biggest jazz festival includes Courtney Pine (Thurs, 7.30pm), the American sax player Joe Henderson (Fri, 7.30pm), guitarist Ralph Towner plus Bliki Masekela (next Sat, 7.30pm) and the South African pianist Abdullah Ibrahim (next Sun, 7.30pm). Cabot Hall, Canary Wharf, Isle of Dogs, London E14 (071-418 2783), Thurs-next Sun, Nov 1.

SALEROOMS

MONDAY: Most print-collecting tastes should be catered for at Phillips with sessions ranging from Old Masterpieces to Modern at 10.30am and 2.30pm. There is even an etching sale as Queen Victoria (up to £100). Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, London W1 (071-629 6602).

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY: A sale of books at Bonhams includes an album of Crimean War portraits by the photographer Roger Fenton (up to £800). Tuesday 2pm. An autographed manuscript of Act 1 of the best known play of the first world war, *Journey's End* by R.C. Sheriff (up to £700) is one of the highlights of a wide-ranging book, map, manuscript and autograph letter sale at Lawrence of Cuckmere, Thursday 11am. In the natural history section James Beaman's *Monograph of Odonotopis*, 1874, is expected to make up to £3,000. Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7 (071-584 9161). Lawrence, South Street, Cuckmere, (0460 730441).

THURSDAY: A mixed sale at Hy. Duke in Dorset includes a collection of New Zealand paintings, a late 18th century Dutch painted and carved cradle, a pair of Regency Gothic side chairs and a collection of modern stamps and coins. 10.30am. At the same time in Leicester, the Royal Ball has a good looking early 19th century Noah's Ark together with other toys and dolls in a furniture and effects sale. Hy Duke & Son, Weymouth Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset (0305 252000).

Heathcote Ball, Castle Auction Rooms, 78 St Nicholas Circle, Leicester (0533 536789).

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a place, Bonhams devote themselves solely to Lalique on Thursday at 6pm. On Friday, 10.30am, he reappears in Sotheby's built around the applied arts Bonhams, as above. Sotheby's, New Bond Street, London W1 (071-493 8080).

VIDEO

BASIC INSTINCT (Giald, 15): San Francisco detective Michael Douglas and ice-pick murder suspect Sharon Stone ride a psychosexual rollercoaster. Paul Verhoeven's violent, misogynistic melodrama scored a huge box-office hit: an unhappy sign of the times. 1992.

MEN OF RESPECT (Columbia TriStar, 15): John Turturro in a version of Macbeth transferred to the New York underworld: a lively enough exercise, but a stillborn movie. Director, William Rally. 1991.

SCORESE 4 (Cinecoisseur, 15): Three spunky student films from the future director of *747 Driver*, plus the 45-minute Italian *Aspettando*, a memorable portrait of Scorese's parents. Available only by mail order (Cinecoisseur Video, 10a Stephen Mews, London WIP 0AX), or through Our Price stores.

UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD (Entertainment Video, 15): Strangers, detectives, a housewife and ex-lovers chase each other from Paris to Siberia and beyond. Wim Wenders' exasperating blend of road movie, romance and science-fiction. Sotheby's Dommer, William Hunt. 1991.

EXHIBITIONS

ALLAN RAMSAY: This year's major Edinburgh Festival show arrives in London. Scots have always insisted a Ramsay retrospective would show him to be a portraitist on a par with his southern contemporaries. Reynolds and Gainsborough and as a painter he can stand comparison in delicacy of touch with the finest artists of the French rococo. National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, WC2 (071-306 0055). Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm, Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 2-6pm, until Jan 17, 1993.

THE SWAGGER PORTRAITS: There has never been a portrait — been any lack in British painting of portraits ready to supply something obviously impressive for their patrons. Van Dyck was the founding father; his followers in the tradition range from Lely and Kneller to Sargent and Augustus. Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (071-821 1313). Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm; Sun, 2-6pm, until Jan 17, 1993.

JUAN GRIS: The one leading figure of the Cubist period not yet collected together for reassessment, Gris (1887-1927) is finally given a major retrospective of some 60 paintings and 30 drawings. This show concentrates on his Cubist work, showing the various phases in the evolution of his style. Whitechapel Art Gallery, Whitechapel High Street, London E1 (071-577 5015). Tues-Sun, 11am-5pm (Wed to 6pm), until Nov 29. Free admission on Tues.

UKYO-E PAINTINGS: Japanese "pictures of the floating world" from the Edo period (1600-1868) are chiefly known in the West in the form of colour woodblock prints. But the same artists also regularly made brush paintings, often to private commission. Many of them concentrate on the semi-private world of the courtesans and geishes. The two-part show has about 100 examples, in the form of screens, hanging scrolls and albums. British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1. (071-636 1555). Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2-6pm. Part 1 until November 29; Part 2 December 1-January 31.

WISDOM AND COMPASSION: THE SACRED ART OF TIBET: More than 160 rare paintings, sculptures and tapestries are brought together for this huge show of Tibetan art dating from the 9th century to the present day and financially supported by The Times. Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1 (071-439 7438). Daily, 10am-6pm, until Dec 13.

THE ART OF ANCIENT MEXICO: A selection of the finest Mexican art with the earliest exhibits dating from ten centuries before Christ. Although the show coincides with the Columbus Quincentenary, it celebrates a civilisation quite different from the culture imposed on Mexico by Spain, with exhibits ranging from austere statues of gods and goddesses to animal pieces. Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8144). Daily, 10am-6pm (Tues, Wed, 8pm, until Dec 6).

THE PAINTED NUDE: Up until the time of Ety in the early 19th century the nude in Britain generally required an excuse, in the shape of a subject from classical myth or a biblical story such as Susannah and the Elders. The nude in painting gradually became accepted in its own right, until today it can be the major preoccupation of a painter such as Lucian Freud without raised eyebrows. This new display at the Tate, the second in the "Crosscurrents" series, charts the history of this change from the gallery's own collection. Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1 (071-821 1313). Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun, 2-5.30pm, until Dec 27.

RICHARD SERRA CANVAS DRAWINGS: The sculptor has been making "canvas drawings" for 20 years in the margins of his major sculptural work. They are made out of Belgian linen, covered with thick layers of black paint, and cut out to shape as required on site. This show constitutes Britain's first opportunity to see this side of Serra's work. Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London W2 (071-402 8075). Daily, 10am-6pm, until Nov 15.

THE SNOW QUEEN: David Bintley's pretty ballet, based on Hans Christian Andersen's fairy-tale, is revived by Birmingham Royal Ballet. With designer Terry Bartlett's glorious evocation of the Snow Queen's arctic kingdom, the ballet may feel a little early for winter but it is sure to be a crowd-pleaser nonetheless. Hippodrome, Hurst Street, Birmingham (021 622 7486), today, 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Mon 7.30pm.

DANCE UNMARRIED: This weekend there is the last chance to catch the American dance pioneer Merce Cunningham and his company at Queen Elizabeth Hall (tonight, tomorrow at 7.45pm). They are followed into the venue by another American, Stephen Petronio (Tues-Wed, 7.45pm), who will be using Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* played solely on piano. If your tastes run to tap dance catch Transatlantic Tap at Riverside (Tues-Wed, 7.45pm). France kicks in with two companies at the Royal Theatre, the Groupe Enlils Dubois (Thurs, Wed, 7.30pm), which is presenting the legend of Don Juan, and Compagnie Jagouat, which is bringing a Trisha Brown work as the highlight of two evening visits to Britain. On Friday, Jonathan Burrows starts two nights at The Place Theatre (8pm). Dance Unmarried: information on 081-741 4040. Contact individual venues for booking.

THE BOLSHOI BALLET: The company's new Bolshoi to London under the new artistic director Yuri Grigorovich, best known for his "spectacle" productions such as *Spartacus* and *The Golden Age*. Against a backdrop created to reproduce the famous Moscow stage, the 160-strong company offers six separate programmes of ballets from such classic ballets as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Swan Lake*, and will give matinee performances of the full-length ballet *Giselle*. Albert Hall, London SW7 (071-823 9998). Jan 12-Feb 14, 1993.

ANNE GET YOUR GUNS: This production of living Berlin's hit musical has successfully toured the regions and will open in the West End. The story tells of the rise of Hilbert Annie Oakley to become the star attraction of Buffalo Bill

Busting to get noticed, like a Madonna of the farmyard

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

There is a practice among the older generation of farm-workers known as "squearing-up". It occurs when a free-ranging mind connects with little limbs to carry out some indefinite purpose. So one might wander to the haystack with a pitchfork and "just square-it-up". It would not be a tiring or geometrical operation, merely the flicking of wisps of hay with apparently little point other than the satisfaction of the man on the end of the fork. The haystack looks no better, but it is squared-up, and the man is happier.

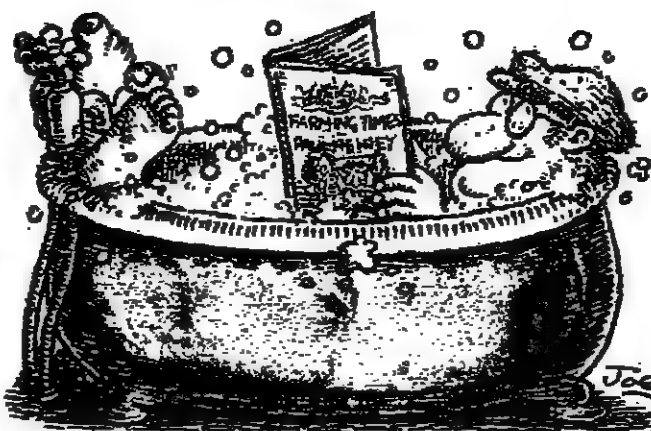
I mention this only because I have been squaring-up a collection of these farming columns, and they have been published in a book. I fear I cannot bring myself to read it. The memories are still too raw. I do not want to be reminded of the day the cows invaded a swimming pool, or various shaming incidents involving what my wife calls "those

woolly bastards". Nor the state of hysteria I reached after growing tons of oats and finding myself unable to turn them into one bowl of porridge. Or the day — all right, several days — when we tried to catch the wild bullock that had lived a lonely life on the marsh and saw no reason to re-enter society. As for the binder, why should I be forced to think of it out of season?

No, this is not a book for me. But do not let me put you off. I have many mouths to feed and sugar-beet nuts do not grow on trees.

So I am going to have to indulge in publicity, hit the headlines and get myself talked about. I thought I might persuade this newspaper to sponsor one of its distinguished public debates, and have been

searching my soul for a burning issue. Alas, I find the only thing on my mind is whether I should lift the mangel-wurds this week. But "This House believes the Mangels should be Lifted Now" is hardly going to bring Fay Weldon and Lord St John to their feet. I have been looking to other authors to see how they manage hype, and I have been greatly impressed by a blonde pop-star named Madonna. She has removed her famous corset and posed for photographs which leave little even to the dulles of imaginations (and which look, I have to say, terribly familiar to anyone acquainted with the mating rituals of the farmyard). Since there is talk of her book being banned, and there



is nothing like prohibition for promoting sales, perhaps it would work for me? Hold on to your hats, here it comes...

This week I am going to talk about breasts. We have had some

cracking breasts on the farm this week: long ones, pencil-slim ones with delicate curves; some short and rather bulky ones; and a rare one that has been worn thin by regular use. Another is so massive

that I cannot see how a man could handle it at all. Still, variety is the spice of life and during the course of last week I have handled them all, got the feel of them under my rough horny hands... How am I doing? Steamy stuff, eh?

These glistening, provocative breasts belong to my plough and I have been sorting through them to find one that will give me the edge in next week's ploughing match. I never knew there was so much to a plough-breast. It is an apparently simple, curved sheet of iron that inverts the soil as it slides over, but its apparent simplicity hides the poetry of perfect motion, for if the ploughman looks briefly away from his horses and furrow, he will see that the breast of the plough is no mere bully, coarsely pushing the land aside; the breast nudges the soil, presses and rolls it with the gentleness of a chef turning pastry. Long, thin breasts are the finest

because of the slowness with which they turn the soil, leaving the furrows unbroken. But a harder, more stubborn land needs a firmer touch and a short, brutal breast.

You can get obsessed with breasts: when I am alone in my study, I like to leaf through old plough catalogues, reading about drag chains, wrought-iron welded bodies and chilled breast linings. Sometimes I lie in the bath and think about Hornsby's Patent Self-Lifting Arrangement, for hours.

Well, is that enough snuff to get my book condemned and sold by the million? I hope so, for I can think of no other way of drawing attention to this book. Not now that the Booker dinner is over and someone else has got the Nobel. The publisher did have another suggestion but, quite frankly, pictures of me wearing corsets and a rain-harness are not going to do anybody a favour.

Loch Leven is little other than a sewer, reports Bruce Sandison

Loch Leven is one of Scotland's most famous and most studied lochs. It is managed as a national nature reserve, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and has been designated a wetland area of international importance under the terms of the Ramsar Convention, signed by the British government in 1973.

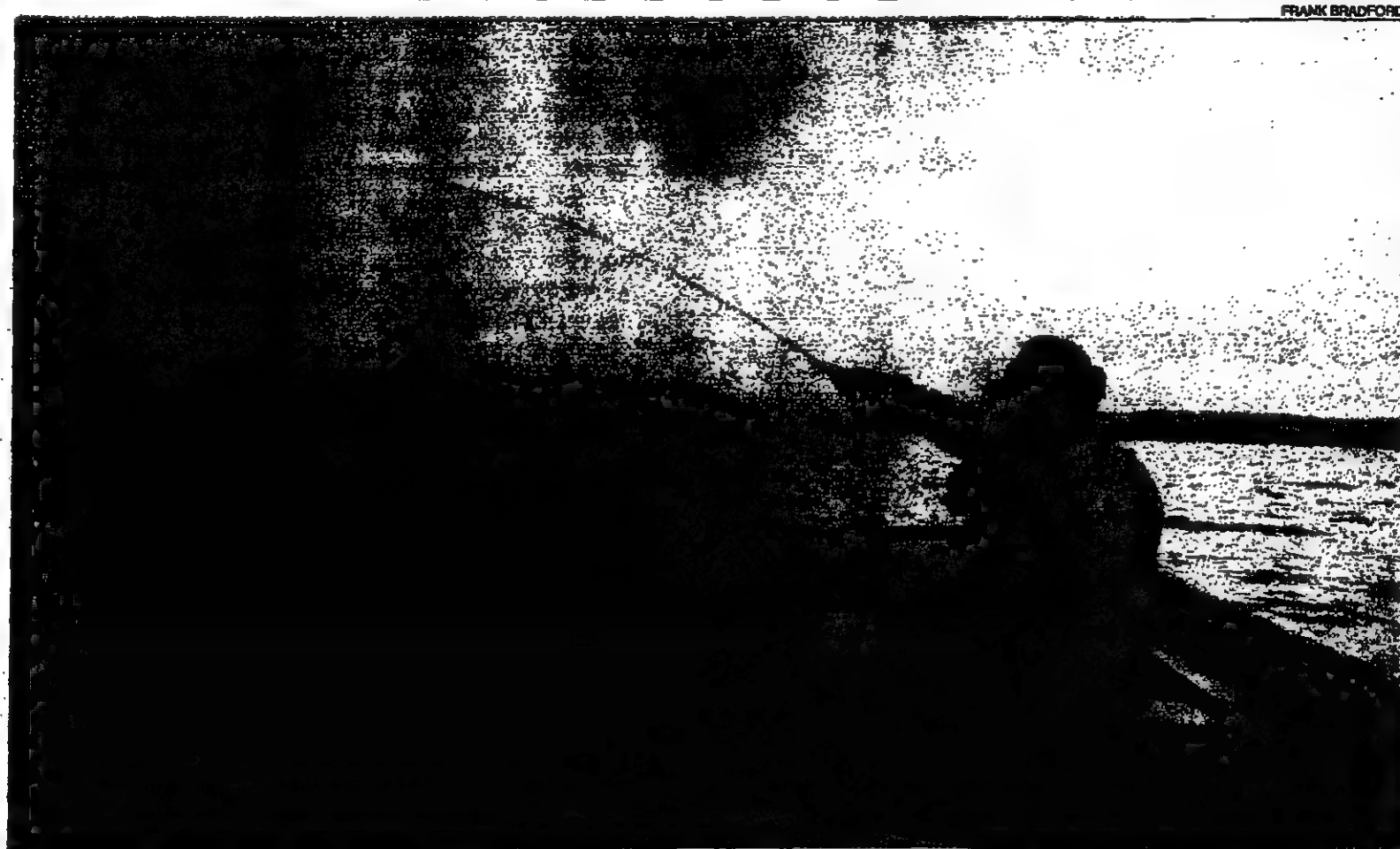
The loch was given Grade 1 status in the Nature Conservation review, qualifies as a Special Protection Area under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, is the centrepiece of the Loch Leven Area of Great Landscape Value and home of the RSPB's Vane Farm Sanctuary.

Loch Leven is also little other than an open sewer.

Last July, because of potentially dangerous toxic algal blooms caused by years of phosphates draining into the loch, notices were posted warning the public not to bathe or allow animals to drink the water. The loch turned bright green and anglers were advised not to eat any fish they caught.

Traditionally, Loch Leven brown trout are of outstanding quality and fishing lots can bring in £400,000 a season. But as the loch has become more toxic, hundreds of fish have died and those which remain rarely rise to angler's flies, because of poor water quality and lack of surface insects to feed on. Consequently, anglers have largely abandoned the loch, leaving its 50 fishing boats idle for most of this season.

With diminishing catches, the loch's owner, Sir David Montgomery, in an attempt to revive angling interest, gained permission from the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), an environmental protection agency, to introduce alien, hatchery-reared American rainbow trout, in the hope that these



Casting out in hope and sorrow: boatman Adam Dixon tries for brown trout in Loch Leven, which has been affected by phosphate pollution

will withstand the pollution. This has caused alarm among anglers who see the introduction of rainbow trout as sounding the death knell for one of the world's greatest natural brown trout fisheries.

Indigenous species of brown trout have survived in Scotland, virtually genetically intact, since the Ice Age, whereas most of Europe has lost its natural species because of pollution, mismanagement and, simply, sheer greed.

Also, for more than 100 years the quality brown trout from the loch have been used to stock waters worldwide, its progeny becoming internationally renowned.

The Loch Leven's algal blooms are not a sudden occurrence. Research between 1967/1972 by the Nature Conservancy Council, SNH's

Brown trout shun troubled waters

predecessor, the Forth River Purification Board, the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, the Freshwater Fishery Research Laboratory, and various universities, showed that even by 1970 the loch was grossly over-enriched. Chemists said then that it would take 20-25 years for excess phosphates to leach out, provided all discharges ended.

But there have been 22 years of increasing levels of discharges as the population

of Kinross and the surrounding communities expanded, and the water treatment plants have been unable to cope. Tayside regional council water services department has urgent plans to improve the situation, funds permitting.

Growing public concern at what is perceived as the failure of responsible bodies to take action to prevent the degradation of the loch has finally prompted action.

Working groups and study groups have been formed, meetings held and a Loch Leven Area Management Advisory Group has been set up with representatives of the SNH, FRPB, Scottish Office, Tayside regional council, anglers, scientists and others.

This action is commendable, but too late to save Loch Leven from becoming a national disgrace. And, so far, nobody has addressed the real problem of why this was

allowed to happen — in spite of the loch's international, national and local importance, and its many environmental protection designations.

Unless responsibility for the state of the loch is established, there is every likelihood that similar disasters will occur elsewhere. Indeed, there is already evidence that more than 22 other Scottish lochs face similar problems.

Loch Leven, once the jewel in Scotland's environmental crown, is dying, destroyed by decades of indifference. Only concentrated efforts above and beyond bureaucratic differences can save it.

The priority must be to stop continuing phosphate pollution, and then to restore water quality. When that will be, on the best scientific evidence available, is anybody's guess.

Feather report

Rush of thrushes

The winter thrushes are arriving in Britain in a steady stream. At night you can often hear the thin, slightly trembling calls of flocks of redwings passing overhead, and even see their dark forms for a moment against the moon. More often you notice fieldfares first in the daytime: there is a sudden, loud "chuck-chuck" in the sky, and a party of nine or ten sweeps by, firm on the wing. Both species are coming down from northern Europe: winter is getting closer there, and the scarlet rowan berries are all gone from the trees.

The fieldfares often settle in thick clumps of hawthorn, where they can still find plenty of fruit on the twigs. They are very handsome birds, about the size of a mistle thrush, and frequently sit on a top branch where the sun shines on them. Their head is bluish grey, their back chestnut, their breast a yellow-brown and their tail black. When they fly off they also show a grey rump.

Redwings are smaller and more furtive. Small, brown birds, very like song thrushes, they reveal their colours when they fly up. Under their wings and along their flanks they have a patch of bright crimson; they also have a creamy eyestripe.

As the weather turns colder they come more into the trees, where they fly in a wild, erratic way from treetop to treetop. Their call is common when they are feeding in the hedges, and is quite characteristic — a soft chuck, like a blackbird's nervous chuck but much more nasal, even faintly wailing.

These are the obvious newcomers from the thrush family to the countryside, as the last summer migrants depart. But there are less conspicuous winter visitors. Little by little the number of blackbirds in the parks and on the

woodland edges is increasing. British blackbirds stay in their summer territories until the weather is really hard, while the immigrants shift about finding food wherever they can. One of the most characteristic sounds of a frosty, sunny day is that of blackbirds vigorously turning over the dry leaves under hedges and trees.

Soft, indolent fluting marks the male blackbird's resumption of his breeding territory, but it will not be heard until the end of January. Our other two thrushes, the song thrush and the mistle thrush, will be singing again before long, however. Both of them are residents in Britain, with the population swelled by immigrants in winter.

The song thrush is an elusive bird, though common. It feeds quietly in shrubberies or comes nervously out on to the grass. But when it sings it is transformed. Its voice rings out from a high bough, repeating one lyrical phrase after another, with occasional bits of gabble in between. It sings from November to July.

The mistle thrush, which is larger and bolder, and shows a flash of silver under its wings as it flies up, also starts singing on early winter days, a rich, wild cry that falters strangely at the end.

Other British birds belong to the family of thrushes, more largely defined — notably the robin and the nightingale. But the six splendid birds I have described here are the classic thrushes of Great Britain.

DERWENT MAY

What's about: *Birders* — check large mixed flocks in woodland for tree creepers and nut hatches. *Twitchees* — desert warblers in the Mount Gould area of Plymouth. Details from *Birdline*, 0898 700222.



The handsome fieldfare likes to sit in sunny high branches

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Bird's-eye view from nature's bathtub

The bath or shower is a traditional place for songs of joy, or for pondering the mysteries of life. It happens that our shower at Mchenja, camp here in the Luangwa valley in Zambia is ideal for either purpose.

You reach it by descending ten steps carved into the living baked mud of the river bank. Three walls and the floor are also riverbank: the roof is a thatch of grass. The water descends from a pair of oil drums on top of the bank, beneath one burns an eternal flame of mopane wood. And here is the magical part: the shower is the same size as a police box but, like Dr Who's Tardis, it is larger inside than outside.

This makes it perfect for contemplating the answer to the mystery of mysteries: the answer proposed by the greatest time-lord of them all: Charles Darwin. For the fourth wall of the shower is the Luangwa river: a magnificent stretch of this rambling, curving, ob-bowing waterway. As you shower, you observe the birds of the river and ask: "How many ways can you catch a fish? How many different beaks can you invent to do so?"

Let us start with herons. Their beaks are long, pointed grabbers: their play is freeze-wait-grab. Each exploits — at least in principle — a different depth, locations and fish. But there is a degree of overlap, the more so as the drought bites harder.

The kingfishers have a different strategy for catching fish: they plunge into the river

like winged daggers. The yellow-billed stork waits with opened beak submerged; he welcomes little fishes in with gently smiling jaws.

All these birds exploit variations of the long grabber. The spoonbill does not. It sits the waters with a great spatula of a beak. It runs about like a manic doing the vacuuming.

The skimmer has a bill still more bizarre. The lower mandible is longer than the upper. It flies along the river, slicing the surface with the lower mandible. When it locates a fish by touch, it snaps.

The open-billed stork has a bill like a pair of callipers. The mandibles meet only at the tip. The bill is designed for shell-fish: the bird can locate, open, remove the meat and eat a mussel without dropping it.

But the most dramatic fisherman is the African fish eagle, which descends on its prey like the wrath of God, grabbing it on the wing with hooked talons and tearing it apart with a hooked bill.

So many fish in the Luangwa: so many ways of catching them. Keratin — the material from which bills are made — can be adapted to an almost fantastic extent.

Find an ecological niche, and a bird will find a beak to exploit it. All over the world their superb adaptability has allowed birds to find more than 8,000 solutions to the problem of existence. There is nowhere better to appreciate this than the Mchenja shower.

Simon Barnes is staying with Savannah Trails, Luangwa National Park, Zambia.

Gardens to visit

☐ Hertfordshire: West Lodge Park, home of the Beale arboretum, with a good selection of trees (all well labelled), including ancient strawberry tree, birch and hornbeam collections. There are also many rare and unusual species, and at this time of year there will be a good display of autumn colour.

Cockfosters Road, Hadley Wood, on A111 between Potters Bar and Southgate. Exit 24 from M25 signed Cockfosters. £1, child 50p. Tomorrow, noon-5pm.

☐ Cornwall: Treacan, three-acre garden in woodland estate, overlooking the Helford river with superb collection of rare trees and shrubs, including nothofagus, Scots pine, holly, hazels, maples and cypripedium.

St Martin's Manage, take B3293 St Keverne road from Helston, turn left for Marazion after 4m, then follow signs. Plant sales. £1, child free. Tomorrow, noon-5pm.

A Few Days in PETRA

Ever since the Swiss explorer Burckhardt rediscovered Petra by chance in 1812, romantic travellers have made their way to the "Rose Red" city. Our week-long visit to Jordan includes 3 days in a comfortable hotel close to the site of Petra, the unique city of the Nabataeans, the Romans and the Crusaders. Also included is a two-night visit to the Dead Sea and visits to Amman.

This land has excited the imagination of the British since the days of Lawrence of Arabia and even before that when Victorian travellers would take many weeks to reach the site of Petra. Our week is the perfect opportunity for those who lack the time for a longer visit to the region. There will be sufficient time to explore at a relaxed pace and the convenient flight schedules allow us to make the most of our time in Jordan.

Itinerary Outline

Fly direct to Amman for an overnight stay at the Fawar Hotel. City drive. Drive to Petra, en route visit Spigalia and Madaba. Also visit Kerak, an important Crusader castle. Continue to Petra and stay 3 nights in the Petra Palace Hotel. Ride (or walk) through the city to the Treasury. Climb Mount Sela, see the Theatre, the Roman Way, the monumental Arch, the Temple and the Royal Tombs. Climb to El Deir, Petra's largest monument. Optional excursion to Beida and Little Petra. Drive to the Dead Sea for a leisurely 2-night stay. Return to Amman by road for an overnight stay (optional excursion to Jerash), thence fly to London.

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Louise Roddon

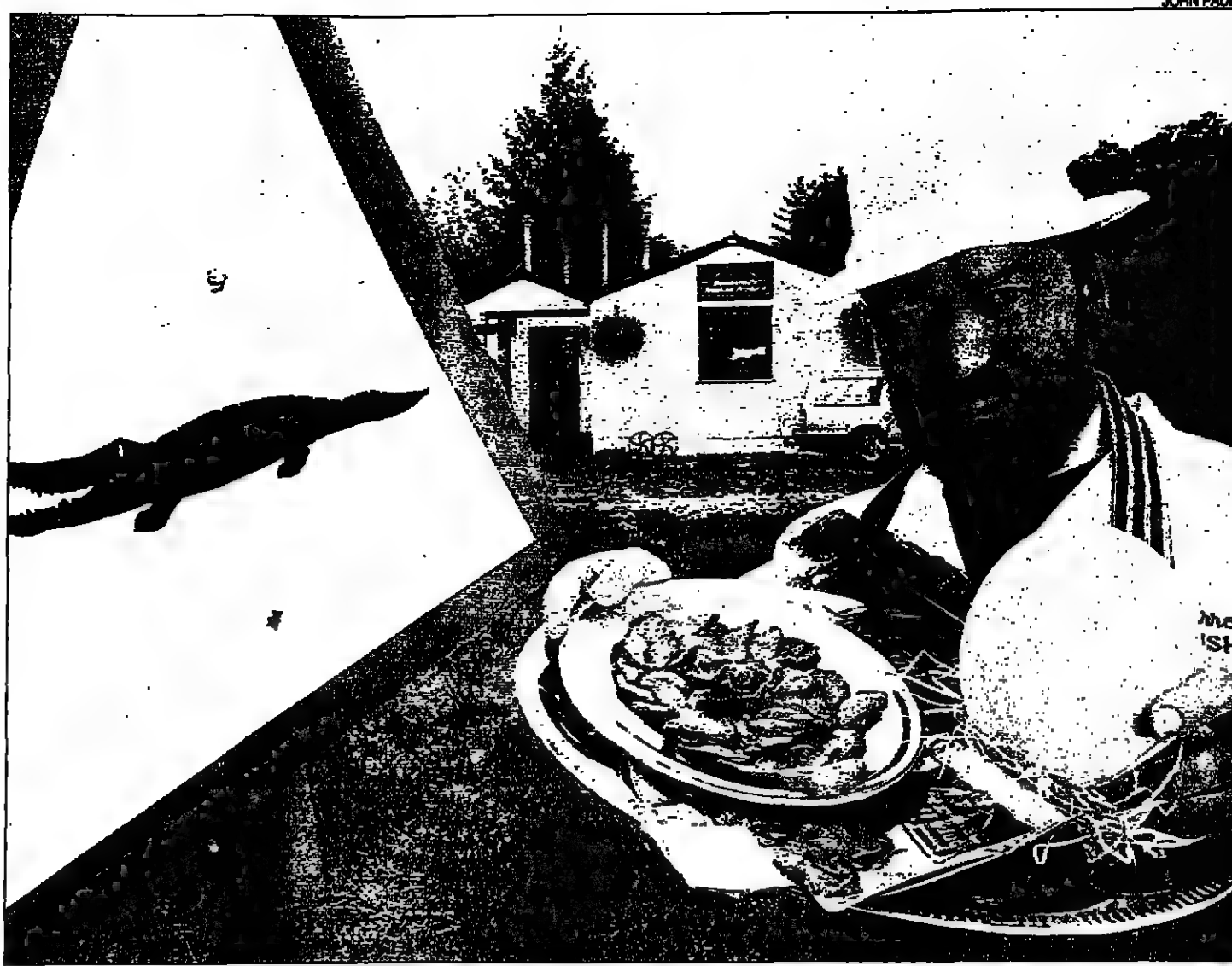
meets a man devoted to ostrich, barracuda and other exotica

The telephone rings in Simon Macdonald's tiny smokehouse at Glenug. A customer wants a rush order of smoked alligator. Earlier, another regular had dropped by in a private helicopter for two packs of smoked mussels and a pound of Macdonald's Lochaber smoked cream cheese. A woman from Kingston wants next-day delivery of four sides of best smoked salmon — to Kingston, Jamaica that is, not the town on the Thames — and others arrive by yacht demanding repeat orders for smoked barracuda or a strip or two of ostrich.

For Macdonald's Smoked Produce — the only company this side of the Atlantic to specialise in smoked alligator — last-minute demands have become part of a daily routine. Mr Macdonald, who started in the fishing business, evolved the company four years ago with help from the former Highlands and Islands Development Board.

To date, his penchant for the peculiar has led him to experiment with smoking parrot fish from the Seychelles, emperor fish from Bali, tying fish and frogs' legs — all of which are enjoying a loyal following in 36 countries spanning Beverly Hills to Tokyo. Smoked salmon, he thinks, has simply become too limiting. "Most smokers head down that avenue, but I was always on the lookout for something a bit different. It started with my Lochaber cream cheese. All the rule books said you can't smoke cream cheese, so that was enough for me to try to prove them wrong."

He describes himself as a man who "since childhood has loved playing with food" — a culinary curiosity which has led him to keep a constant eye on trends among top



Smoking tonight: at his Glenug smokehouse, Simon Macdonald often takes his cue from what the top British chefs are dishing up

British chefs, many of whom he regards as pioneering forces. So when fresh alligator started to appear on smart London menus, Mr Macdonald decided the time was ripe for smoking the beast.

"Fresh alligator is so tough, you could make car tyres out of it and never suffer a puncture. I had to work out how to get it to an acceptable level of chewiness," says Mr Macdonald.

"The main problem was how to smoke the meat, given it had never been done before, but my experience helps me instinctively to know which type of marinade to use."

Macdonald's smoked alligator is indeed acceptably chewy — perhaps not as meltingly soft as his barracuda, but with surprisingly less of a "bite" than his newest smoked product, South African ostrich (culled from the farm in Oxfordshire described on these pages recently).

Though the brines and marinades may differ with each meat, Mr Macdonald always uses the same wood for the smoking process — American oak from old whisky barrels, which accounts for his trademark of fine delicate flavouring. Smoked alligator, originating in its fresh state from the same farm in Louisiana where *Live and Let Die* was filmed, has proved particularly popular with Americans. He smokes it up and sends it back, a development he sees as "rather like taking coals to Newcastle".

Nevertheless, the global demand for these exotic foodstuffs has helped to free his business from the confines of seasonal work.

Working from a remote area, Mr Macdonald was keen to provide year-round employment for most of the residents of Glenug, a north-west Highland hamlet which he describes as small enough in population to fit into the lower level of a London double-decker. His staff

'Alligator is not half as endangered as the person who has to feed the beast'

produce 3,000 princess scallops a day for British Airways long-haul flights, and supply smoked oddities to top hotel and restaurant chefs, and to stores such as Selfridges and Harrods, as well as meeting mail-order demands. A three-month contract with Concorde has just been extended, following news that the airline chef wishes to seduce high-flyers with smoked alligator served on a bed of scrambled eggs. Mr Macdonald enjoys supplying airlines because, he says, "you've got a captive audience".

As yet the company has no plans to launch the likes of Big Mac barracuda burgers. Instead, serving suggestions are kept strictly within the realms of haute cuisine. Alligator is particularly delicious,

Mr Macdonald says, served hot with a wild mushroom sauce and a simple side salad. "I'm a fanatic with mushrooms," he explains.

"The same goes for barracuda — one of the finest of fish to work with. Try it diced into an amazing pâté with a chanterelle and champagne sauce — this works well with smoked ostrich too. Ostrich has a fine, delicate flavour — we use a lot of red wine marinade. What to drink with it? As much as you possibly can... preferably a Chardonnay for a complimentary oaky flavour."

Smoked alligator and ostrich both retail at around £2.95 for a 2oz pack, the meat being cut into fine strips. The prolonged aftertaste means a little goes a long way — consider 2oz the equivalent of 12oz of smoked salmon, he says.

For the ecological watchdogs, Mr Macdonald has reassuring news. "Alligator is not half as endangered as the person who feeds the beast. If anything, it's a species that is on the increase — and causing problems. The same goes for ostrich, which has been farmed for many years. Really, it's the ideal present for the person who has everything."

Simon Macdonald's Smoked Produce, Glenug, Lochaber, Invernesshire (06877 266).

Pumpkin man's big party scoop

NEXT Saturday is the big day for David Bowman. He has been growing pumpkins for the past 11 years and reckons to sell 90 per cent of his yearly crop for Halloween.

Mr Bowman, who lives near Spalding in Lincolnshire, has supplied Tesco for eight years, and other supermarkets more recently. Usually October 31 brings his business to an abrupt halt. "Try selling pumpkins in a wholesale market in November: nobody wants to know," he says.

His one continuing outlet is a contract to supply the New Covent Garden Soap Company with pumpkins to make their festive pumpkin soap, which continues selling in supermarkets through November and into December.

"I had to start growing a different variety to do it," he says. "It is called Gold-keeper and stores well into the winter."

Mr Bowman's pumpkin culture started almost accidentally from a fad of his father's. The family grew marrow, courgettes and squashes, but as they were sowing the seed, Mr Bowman senior would flick the occasional pumpkin seed in among the rest. Then in the autumn when the other plants died back, there would be orange balls lying around in the fields.

One day a market trader offered Mr Bowman 3p for a pumpkin for his stock. After that the crop developed serious attention, and now it makes up more than half Mr Bowman's income. Mr Bowman is growing pumpkins on 40 rented acres at Pinchbeck, paying £200 an acre for use of the rich Lincolnshire loam. He is paid 15-18p a pound by the supermarkets, which have been selling the fruit this year at 29p a lb.

After sowing, field pumpkins are undemanding until harvest time, Mr Bowman says. "We use no chemicals and do not irrigate. Pumpkins do not get many diseases, though we all live in dread of zucchini mosaic virus, which can go through a crop like wildfire. This year has been dreadful, with the cold and wet making the pumpkins late to ripen and liable to rot."

Mr Bowman was prompted

by his wife to approach Tesco as an outlet after she had read an article in a women's magazine suggesting that Britain imported a vast tonnage of pumpkins each year. The article was wrong; the figure it quoted included marrow, courgettes and cucumbers. But, as luck had it, Tesco was looking for British pumpkin suppliers at the time.

The more the fruit got into the supermarkets, the more it sold, Mr Bowman says. "The trade was helped somewhat by the frequency with which Australians were seen eating pumpkin in Neighbours. 'It would help even more if they could do it at the right time of year,'" Mr Bowman says. "The Australians seasons are all about five in relation to ours, so they go eating pumpkins all over the television during the spring, when we haven't any to sell."

The French roast and bake their pumpkins; North Americans make them into Thanksgiving pies; South Americans use them to thicken stews, and make savoury snacks of the seeds; South Africans transform pumpkins into dessert fritters, and Turks turn them into candy. Britons habitually hollow them into Halloween lanterns, and then throw them away.

Does Mr Bowman, then, pull his own weight by eating pumpkins? Actually, no. "I like cauliflower, runner beans and Brussels sprouts," he says, "but you can keep the rest."

He eats pumpkins only when his wife "disguises it as something else", and he goes with a diet of a Tesco survey which suggested that 85 per cent of pumpkins sold are not carved into lanterns, or turned into fairy-tale carriages, but actually eaten.

"If that is true, why is it that I have to shift 300 tonnes for Halloween, and so few for the rest of the season?" he asks. "This year seems to be worse than any I have known for people waiting to order at the last moment, but with Halloween falling on a Saturday I am hoping there are going to be a lot of parties with big pumpkins all over the place."

ROBIN YOUNG

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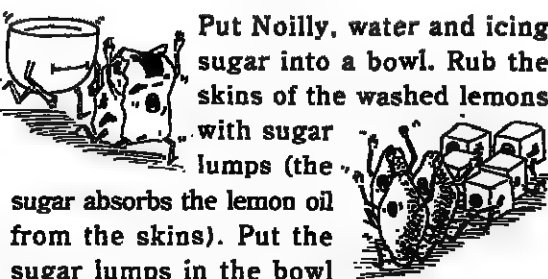
TAKE A BOTTLE HOME AND MAKE A MEAL OF IT.



Bitter Lemon Sorbet

Recipe supplied by Liam Mahon-Turner, Marie School of Cookery

300g lemons
5 large sugar lumps
100g icing sugar
3 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons Noilly Prat



Put Noilly, water and icing sugar into a bowl. Rub the skins of the washed lemons with sugar lumps (the sugar absorbs the lemon oil from the skins). Put the sugar lumps in the bowl with the icing sugar and allow to dissolve. Cut the lemons in half squeezing the juice into the bowl through a sieve. Stir. Put the mixture into a plastic container. Freeze until firm.

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Go to work on a Spanish fried egg

Alicia Rios and

Lourdes March

on a simple staple of Iberian cuisine

life and the resurrection of Christ. In baroque painting, therefore, the appearance of eggs consciously placed in the foreground is much more than a decorative or anecdotal detail.

The Spanish have a weakness for

Spanish cuisine embraces many different kinds of influences, and takes advantage of high-quality, staple foods of great nutritional value grown throughout the country. In addition, Spain has developed its own individual cooking style, based on foods fried in olive oil, as well as different kinds of stews and hotpots.

Most Spanish people are passionate about their cuisine. When they are away from home, they go to great lengths to seek it out — for some expatriates it is the only element of Spanish culture that cannot be replaced.

That we have overcome any possible squeamishness about eating the ovum of a bird is of great advantage to us nutritionally. Perhaps it is the extraordinary aesthetic qualities of eggs when they are being cooked that encouraged us to do this. The writer Nuñez Alonso thinks we owe the discovery of the fried egg to its beauty — shining, bright yellow enamel framed in white porcelain — and even goes so far as to imagine the beauty of a vault decorated with fried eggs.

The egg plays an important role in the kitchen. It is very versatile, adopting different forms depending on how it is used. It can be eaten on its own or gradually added to other foods, achieving its greatest splendour in cake-making.

Throughout the history of cooking, the egg has taken on various associations, as a saving grace for abstainers at the most difficult times of their fasting; as a cure or source of strength for invalids and convalescents; and, strangely, as a symbol of the resurrection, which is the origin of *monas de Pascua*, buns encased with eggs. These buns are baked at the beginning of spring to coincide with Easter celebrations and so this symbol represents both nature's return to



Just desserts: apricot confection from Maestro Palmero's Café

fried eggs, but these, being usually one of the cheapest meals, cannot be said to enhance the status of anyone who eats them in public. However, a Spaniard will always opt for a couple of fried eggs when at a loss for what to eat. All restaurants are ready for this emergency, usually not even bothering to list them on the menu.

In Spain the ability to fry an egg has long been the yardstick by which culinary skills are measured, and it is therefore most derogatory to remark that someone "doesn't even know how to fry an egg".

Eggs can be fried with or without puntilla (crispy edges) or *aburruelados* (encased in puffed-out skin). To make an egg with puntilla the oil must be very hot before the egg is added. Then a border of toasted lace will form, enclosing small bubbles of oil. To

avoid the formation of puntillas the oil should not be too hot and the eggs must be removed when the white solidifies. *Aburruelados* require a certain degree of skill as the amount of very hot oil required means that it is liable to splatter, and may even catch fire.

In Spain eggs are often fried with chorizo sausage, which gives them a transparent, reddish varnish. The *morcilla* blood sausage is actually preferable, however, because its softer texture allows it to melt more effectively with the egg yolk. Eggs may also be served with Spanish-style fried potatoes, which are thick and soft and can be squashed with a fork and mixed with the yolk to create a dish suggestive of the great Spanish potato omelette.

A painting by Velázquez from his Seville period, *An Old Woman Frying Eggs*, features the various elements involved in egg-frying. Instead of the more usual metal skillet (frying pan), an earthenware casserole is portrayed, perhaps

because it is more appropriate to the rustic nature of the scene. It is tempting to imagine that the old woman is going to make eggs with puntillas, because she is holding her spoon ready to sprinkle on the hot oil. This painting is an important record of egg-frying, especially as it is one of the few Spanish works of art showing the act of cooking.

Flamenco eggs

(*known as La Flamenca*)
Flamenco eggs were first eaten at the end of the 17th century at a lunch held at the royal residence of Aranjuez, in a country estate called La Flamenca. It was during a hunt attended by Charles IV of Spain. The elegance and colour of the dish, together with the king's taste for it, led to its becoming a classic served both at home and in restaurants.

1 cup (3 fl oz/90ml) olive oil
1 onion (5oz/155g), finely chopped
3/4oz (100g) cured ham, diced small

1lb (500g) tomatoes, peeled and finely chopped
3/4oz (100g) peas, cooked
3/4oz (100g) green beans, cooked
5oz (155g) diced, fried potatoes
3/4oz (100g) chorizo (paprika-flavoured cured pork sausage), thinly sliced
salt and freshly ground pepper
4 eggs

Preheat the oven to 350F (180C/gas 4). Heat the oil in a skillet and fry the onion on low heat. When it starts to brown, add the ham and sauté for two

minutes, then add the tomatoes. Let the mixture reduce, then add the peas, green beans and potatoes. Add the chorizo, season and mix well. Cook for a few minutes. Transfer to individual earthenware dishes and break an egg on to each one. Bake until the eggs set; serve.

Taken from *The Heritage of Spanish Cooking* by Alicia Rios and Lourdes March, published by Ebury Press (£25 from good bookshops, or telephone 0279 427203 to order).

See Frances Bissell (facing page) for some Spanish winter warmers.

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Mainly plain meals of Spain

Frances Bissell, the Times cook, offers a choice of simple but warming dishes



THIS week's food route leads from the cool Basque coast south to the high plateau of Spain, where the Douro river of Portugal becomes the Duero in the heart of Castilla y León at Zamora. In the centre and south of Spain, baking and frying are the cooking methods most suited to the food and climate, but it gets cold on the high plains and can be miserably damp where the Pyrenees meet the Atlantic ocean. Stews, braised dishes and thick soups are served, all of which are perfect for late autumn cooking in Britain.

The ingredients are not expensive; this is simple cooking rooted in local foodstuffs and customs. Meat and potatoes, or rice, are the basics, enhanced by pimiento and garlic, but not much in the way of herbs. A plate of salad, tomato and onion or lettuce and tomato, will be served as the vegetable dish.

In Castilla y León the pig is king, the slender Iberian pig which feeds on acorns and grazes freely in the oak forest. For fresh pork, it is killed when it is one year old, but for the famous *jamón*, it needs to be two years old. The reason the ham is so good is that the meat is marbled with fat throughout. During the curing process the fat liquefies, making the meat tender and giving it its unique flavour.

Jamón is likely to start any Castilian meal, with slices of *chorizo* and *lomo*, the cured pork loin, and some slices of *queso de Zamora* or *queso de Castilla*, which might be made of cow's or ewe's milk, or a mixture. The *ovella* (ewe's milk) is very good; hard and pungent, yet with a rich and satisfying flavour. That made by Guzman is available in Britain.

When I had dinner at Serafin in Zamora, where Elena Alonso Rodriguez is the cook, the starters were more ambitious and included *mollejas* (sweetbreads), *pulpo* (octopus cooked with oil, wine and onions), *bacalao* (peppers, onions and tomatoes), and a splendid dish of *arroz a la Zamorana*, the equal

of any paella I have eaten. What made it so tasty were all the odds and ends of pork — ears, trotters, jowl — which together produce a lip-sticking sauce full of flavour.

As well as some of these hearty dishes, I have included in today's recipes some ideas from another Spanish tradition, *merienda*, ideal for cheering you up on a miserable day, but also for entertaining friends as an alternative to afternoon tea. *Merienda* consists of hot chocolate and light pastries, and occasionally savoury snacks. Empress Eugénie, the Spanish wife of Napoleon III, popularised this meal in Biarritz.

The first recipe is based on the soup I had at Bodegas Los Curros in Rueda. Agustín Goytze, one of my hosts, was specific about the way the potatoes were prepared. After peeling, they were not cut but broken into pieces, by inserting a thick knife point in and levering off a chunk. The rough surface gives more area in contact with the water, enabling it to cook through.

It is in simple rustic dishes of this kind that one sees the pitfalls of trying to translate them from one culture to another. In Britain, we do not make this type of soup because we do not have a native potato which will stand up to an hour's boiling. Gardeners may well have exactly the right kind of firm, dense, waxy potato that you find in Spain and France: La Ratte will work. Pink Fir Apple might, depending on where it is grown. The Potato Marketing Board recommends Madine, which is fairly widely available.

Potatoes con costillas (potatoes and spare ribs soup)
(serves 6-8)
2lb/900g pork spare ribs
4 cloves of garlic, or more to taste, peeled and sliced
4lb/340g firm ripe tomatoes
1lb/455g potatoes, peeled
1lb/230g chorizo sausage
water, salt, pepper

In a heavy saucepan, fry the spare ribs gently until the fat runs. Drain this off. Add the garlic, tomatoes,

and the potatoes prepared as described above. Slice the sausage, and put it in the pot. Add about 3-4pt/1.7-2.3l of water, and simmer for about an hour until the meat is tender and falling from the bone. Season after about 45 minutes. Serve in heated, shallow soup plates with plenty of bread.

Arroz a la Zamorana (rice and pork)
(serves 6-8)
1 or 2 pig's trotters
1 pig's ear
piece of pig's jowl
1oz/30g lard
1 onion, peeled and chopped
3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
parsley and oregano
1lb/10g cured ham, in a piece
1lb/230g belly pork
1 tbsp olive oil
pinch of mild paprika
1lb/455g rice or paella rice, such as Arborio or Calasparra
thin slices of streaky bacon to cover

Chop the trotters into three or four pieces. Trim and clean the ear and

jowl, and cut into small pieces. Melt the lard in a heavy saucepan, and fry the onion until golden brown. Add the pork pieces, and when browned, add the garlic and herbs. Cover with water and simmer gently until the trotter pieces are tender, about 2-3 hours. Dice the ham and the belly pork, and brown it in a sauce pan with olive oil. Dust with a little paprika and stir in the rice. Add the contents of the saucepan, mix together and cook until the rice is done, boiling water if necessary. When cooked, cover the surface with the slices of bacon. Put the whole thing under a pre-heated grill until the bacon browns. Remove and serve.

Chocolate Eugénie
(serves 10-12)
2pt/1.5l full cream milk
78oz/200ml whipping or single cream
1 vanilla pod or 3in/7.5cm stick of cinnamon or 2 blades of mace
pinch of salt
12oz/340g dark chocolate, with high cocoa solids content
pinch of freshly ground black pepper

Put the milk and cream with the chosen spice in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Break up the chocolate, put it in a bowl, and pour the milk over. Stir until the chocolate has melted and let it stand in a warm place for a few minutes to infuse. Strain it into a heated jug, whisk to a froth, if you like, and serve. This is a very rich drink, to be served in small cups. A less rich version, such as you find in most Spanish cafés, is made with chocolate and water and thickened with a little cornflour.

Churros
(serves 6-8)
1pt/5.70ml water
12oz/340g sifted flour
2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
1 tsp salt
oil for frying
icing sugar for dusting

The basic paste is made in a similar way to choux paste. Bring the water to the boil and remove from the heat. Tip in the flour and stir vigorously. Put back over the heat

and mix until smooth. Remove from the heat and beat in the eggs little by little until the mixture becomes smooth and glossy. Spoon it into a large piping bag with broad, fluted nozzle. Bring a large pan of oil (such as sunflower or groundnut) to 180C/350F and pipe in lengths of paste about 4-5in/10-12cm long. Do not crowd the pan or the temperature will drop and the paste absorb oil. When done, taking no more than a few minutes, the *churros* will be crisp and pale gold. Drain on paper towels and serve very hot, dusted with icing sugar.

UNLIKE the *churros*, which are rich and filling, the next recipe makes feather-light sweet eats. *Escumones* (in Spanish, seafoam) are the specialty of La Estrella café in Stages, Canalside, the perfect place to go for *merienda*. The ingredients are egg white, sugar and almonds. The only difficulty is getting them bone-dry and crisp. *Escumones* are so quick to make that you must put the oven on before

you start mixing. Set the oven first at 150C/300F, gas mark 2, and line a baking sheet with rice paper or other non-stick paper.

Escumones
(makes 12-15)
1 free-range egg white
2oz/60g caster sugar
1½oz/50g ground almonds

Whisk the egg white until foamy and then gradually whisk in the sugar as if making a meringue. Gently fold in the ground almonds. Spoon the mixture into rough, craggy heaps on the baking sheet and put in the oven immediately, just above the middle. Bake for eight to ten minutes, until a pale golden peach colour, hardly coloured at all in fact. Move to a lower shelf, turn down the heat to 100C/215F, gas ½, and leave for a further six to eight minutes. Switch the oven off and open the door slightly, leaving the meringues to dry out thoroughly for 20-30 minutes. Remove from oven and cool on a wire rack.

A sip of toasty smoky bacon

Jane MacQuitty finds out how some of the leading wines get their smoky, oaky flavours

Smoky wines: fact, or wine writers' fantasy? There are lots of reasons why a wine could be described as having a smoky quality but, unlike smoked foods, at no stage during production is it exposed to smoke-laden air.

Wine's smokiness, or lack of it, stems from three different causes: choice of grape, the soil the vines are grown on, and the oak barrels in which it is fermented, or aged, or both.

The French have the most lyrical expressions for smoky wines. The phrase *pierre de fusil*, or gun-flint, is much heard around the Loire, particularly in Sancerre and neighbouring Pouilly-sur-Loire, whose wines are called *poilly blanc fumé*, or smoked.

These wines come from the sauvignon grape. It is this variety's subtle, smoky, flinty quality, I feel, that is noticeable wherever it is planted in the world, overlaying its more gooseberry-green, flowering currant characteristics.

Certain soils accentuate the sauvignon grape's gunsmoke hallmark, particularly the chalky-flinty soil at Sancerre and Pouilly-sur-Loire. But if you look hard enough for it, a smoky, gunshot-like scent should accompany every sauvignon, be it a humdrum Sauvignon de Touraine or a first-class Kiwi version.

If sauvignon is the world's smokiest white wine grape, then syrah is easily the smokiest red. Syrah wines have an unmistakable smoky, spicy, peppery intensity. Some, par-



Art of oak: the wood used in the barrels imparts the flavour of the wine they hold

ticularly those grown on the steep granite slopes of the northern Rhône, even have a smoky bacon flavour. Sceptics need only try Louis Belle's '90 Crozes Hermitage (Oddbins £7.49) to be converted.

Other red grapes with a smoky edge include the cabernet franc wines of the Loire, and sometimes of Bordeaux. Here smokiness is allied to a dark, dusty-musky quality.

One of the world's most distinctively smoky wine styles comes from the sub-tropical Hunter Valley in Australia, where the semillon grape thrives in its fertile, red volcanic soil. With age, at least five years, but, strangely, no oak, it transforms into glorious toasty oak flavours wrapped in rich, honeyed, lime-scented fruit.

If volcanic soil can deliver smoky wines, so too can the fine, chalky Kimmeridgian clay of Chablis. Good chablis is scarcer and pricier than it should be. But the real McCoy, grown on Kimmeridge

day, will in good years produce lots of smoky, steely, complex, almost cheesy fruit for which devotees are happy to pay at least £10 a bottle.

Wine lovers who grumble about modern lack of finesse and flavour with chablis will find the same criticism can be applied to the wines of the Mosel. The best, grown on steep-sided, slate-soil, sun-trap vineyards, offer heaps of steely, smoky, slate-influenced elegance. The worst Mosel, from low-lying, fertile fields, is sweet and sulphury.

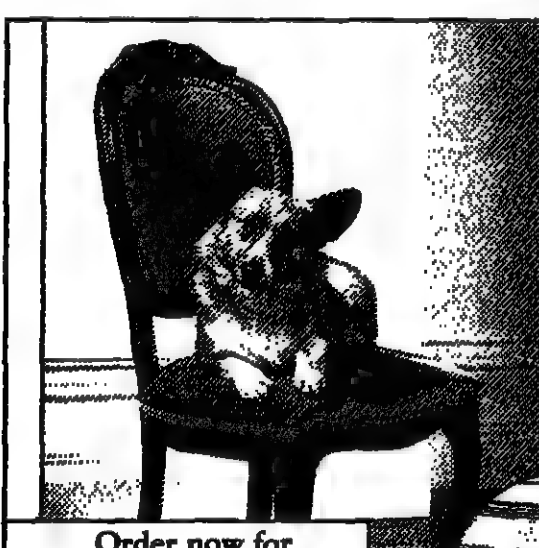
Obviously, growing a smoky grape variety, such as sauvignon, in a smoky soil doubles the intensity of the resulting wine's smoky scents and flavours. But the most pronounced smoky flavours of all in wine usually stem from the stint it has had in oak.

Today, fermenting first-class white wines, particularly those made from the

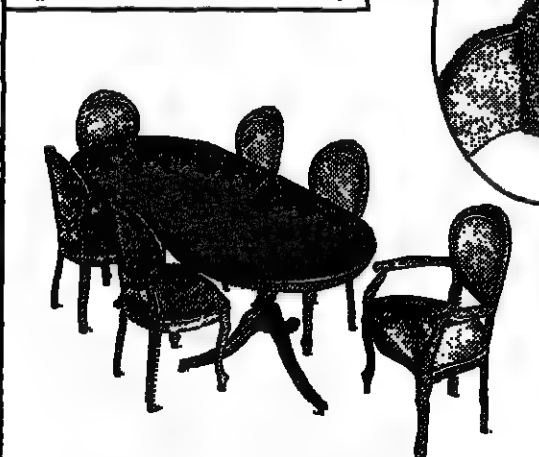
chardonnay grape, in new oak has become an international practice. The oak flavours gained at this stage are often richer, creamier and more harmonious than those gained maturing in cask. Most modern wine spends from three months to two years in oak. Full-bodied reds such as Bordeaux spend the most time, lighter whites, such as vin de pays, the least.

But, as Robert Mondavi of California proved in his extensive oak trials, it is not just the time spent in oak that gives wine a smoky, toasty quality, but the manner of curing the barrel and the type of oak.

Whether the oak is mild and air-dried, harsh and kiln-dried, nutty Limousin or spicy Nevers, Mr Mondavi's trials also revealed the prime importance of the depth and intensity of toasting on the inside of the barrel, resulting from how long the cooper kept each stave over the flame as he bent and burnt the wood into place.



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Fresh, smoky sauvignon fruit, from one of the most dedicated winemakers in the Loire, whose wine's steely, gun-flint style has been softened by creamy, lightly toasty oak.

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Only the finest blends are aged in oak at this excellent co-operative, and this smoky, premier cru with its cheesy, floral fruit is a winner.

• 1989 Chateau de Rochefort, André Lurton, Woltres £7.85.

Rich, full, elegant, mineraly Graves white with lots of ripe,

seely concentrated fruit. Effortlessly demonstrates yet again André Lurton's expertise.

• 1989 Montagny 1er Cru, Caves de Buxy

Gateway and Somerfield £7.39

Both fermented and matured in oak. Buxy's cuvée spéciale offers plenty of rich, spicy, vegetal chardonnay flavours, rounded off with smoky-spicy oak.

• 1988 Falkenstein Hölberg Riesling Kabinett, Friedrich

Wilhelm Gymnasium

The Victoria Wine Company £5.29

Subtle, smoky slate bouquet backed by rich floral and lime fruit.

Salons of tea and empathy

London's contemporary salonières are thriving. Robert Tewdwr-Moss reports

The main element of a salon," says Felicity Mason, who under the name of Anne Cumming is writing up her life of sexual misadventure, "is not so much patronage as one artist helping another. And, of course, it's good to talk with articulate people."

At the age of 75, Mrs Mason is one of the most energetic networkers of all, introducing young writers, actors and designers to useful people at her crowded flat in Lisson Grove, west London.

Her first husband was a cousin of the Queen Mother, and her second, Richard Mason, wrote *The World of Suzy Wong*. She became notorious for her book *The Love Habit*, about her affairs with 20-year-old boys when she was 60, and was dubbed the "Randy Granny" by the *News of the World*. In 1991 she appeared topless in the *Sunday Sport*.

Her campaigning television broadcasts about geriatric sex have earned her many admirers, including Alf, a dustman, and Cynthia Payne, the former brothel-keeper, who both appear at her salons, along with the novelist Paul Bailey, Alberto Moravia's mistress Dacia Maraini, the cook Robert Carrier, the poetess Fiona Pitt-Kahley, and Christopher Isherwood's biographer Peter Parker.

Mrs Mason's salon food (largely Marks & Spencer's best) is served on the local tea market's worst (mainly chipped blue porcelain), and she pours tea from an enormous, stained pot, her Chekhovian hairdo becoming more deranged by the minute.

She has a habit of introducing people by saying: "Have you met my Chapter Seven? He is now the Italian ambassador to the Gulf and lives in Dubai."

Anything goes in Mrs Mason's salon (someone who had written a book on body piercings once bared all), but she bans drunkards. "Alcoholism is such a menace; it totally distorts the personality," she says in Victorian schoolmasterian tones. "And it always spoils the fun."

In the past, a salon was generally open only to like-minded people, usually artists or, as in the case of Lady Londonderry's, politicians. It was invariably run by a hostess who exerted influence over her guests. "She could regulate the conversation," says the writer Sir Peter Quennell, a veteran of Otoline

Morrell's gatherings at Garsington, near Oxford, and of Virginia Woolf's tea parties in Bloomsbury.

"The salon of the 1900s was an early example of networking," says Miranda Seymour, who has just completed a biography of Lady Ottoline. "Not only were Ottoline's parties tremendously stylish but they were useful. She would introduce an artist to a patron, explaining very clearly what each could do for the other."

Today, state funding of the arts, company sponsorships and growing publishers' advances have diminished the need for a patron, but the idea of the salon thrives. Artistic types relish the opportunity of getting together to discuss a new book or play and the latest gossip, high and low.

At the salon run by French writer Jean Gimpel and his wife, Catherine, guests are introduced by their occupation. The couple hold salons for two seasons a year (January-February, and July-August) on Sundays from 3-5pm at their flat in Chelsea. "A salon should be regular, held at the same time each week and have a regular clientele, to enable friendships to be formed," says M Gimpel, who writes about medieval architecture and technology.

Despite inviting many novelists to the salon, he never reads their work. "You see, I'm normal. I'm an extrovert. I have no need for the compensation of novels," he says. Nevertheless, he has several bookshelves of signed copies, and if he knows that one of the writers, such as Edward de Bono, is coming to his next salon, he displays his books on the sideboard for guests to peruse.

Other guests include Jung Chang (the award-winning author of *Wild Swans*), octogenarian novelist Vincent Brome, Robert Elan, Paul Pickering, Ken Follet, Denis Farr (director of the Courtauld Institute), the environmentalist Edward Goldsmith (brother of James), and Carl Djerassi, the inventor of the Pill.

Although the son and brother of leading art dealers, M Gimpel is "against art and artists and the neo-religious cult that has been formed around them since the Renaissance. I will have no art in my flat. I prefer to look at my wife."

Certain rules are observed in the



The way they were: an archetypal salon devoted to the arts, captured in *Schubert Evening*, by painter Julius Schmid (1854-1935)



Lady Londonderry: an influential salon hostess whose guests in the early 1900s were mainly politicians



Virginia Woolf: one of the most brilliant salonières. Her tea parties in Bloomsbury became a literary cult



Felicity Mason: notorious for writing books about geriatric sexual adventures, but says she deplores alcoholics



Vivienne Westwood: the fashion designer and innovator of punk style, and the latest of London's salonières

salon. People are always invited by telephone. "If they bring a new person they must bring them at three o'clock sharp, so that we can get to know them. We do get angry if they don't do this," says M Gimpel in a deep, treble French accent. Their only other requirement is that a guest should have "presence". M Gimpel says: "If one half of a couple is boring, we cannot ask them to the salon."

A smaller, cosier salon is run by the writer John Lahr at his flat in Belgrave Park, north London, on one regular afternoon throughout the summer. As with all salons, there is a certain informality about whom one can bring. John Lahr is the son

of the actor who played the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*, and is obsessed by the theatre world. His salon is a lively affair mixing the worlds of stage and literature — guests might include the actresses Gayle Hunnicutt and Connie Booth, the film director Karel Reisz and his wife Betsy, and the poet Elaine Feinstein, plus a smattering of lesser known actors, journalists or art critics.

Simple tea-time food is served, some brought by the guests. Conversation is entertaining rather than frivolous, well-informed, chatty but seldom bickery.

"One of the problems with running a salon today," says Sonia

Meichett, one of London's hostesses in the arts, "is that I have to be at home every Sunday. In the jet-set age, it is no longer possible to live like this. I also think most hostesses who spend money on a party want it to go towards fund-raising for the likes of AIDS."

In a sense, if one could find a salonière today, says Miranda Seymour, it would be Lady Melchett. "She is the best example of the networking hostess." Her guests are the English artistic establishment, including Lord Weidenfeld, Harold and Anonima Pinter, Claire Tomalin, Michael Egan and Kathleen Tynan. "But I always include young people in my

parties who might be helped by meeting someone of greater influence," Lady Melchett says.

When Vivienne Westwood, the fashion designer, announced on *Desert Island Discs* that she intended to open her own salon, it took the literary world by surprise.

"What do you expect she knows about salons?" asked one hostess. Under the guidance of her "guru" Malcolm, Miss Westwood seems eager to follow in the footsteps of Madame de Chatelet, Princesse de Polignac, Collette, Gertrude Stein, Lady Ottoline Morrell, Sybil Colefax and Ivy Compton-Burnett. Now there's a talking point.

Venues

CLEARLY you cannot buy your way into a salon. The best way to get invited is to write a book, paint a picture or compose a symphony so brilliantly that no salon would be complete without you.

Among the clubs noted particularly for their friendly artistic atmosphere are:

• **The Academy Club**, established by Victoria Glendinning and Auberon Waugh, at 51 Beak Street, Soho, London W1. Membership is £75 a year. £50 if you live outside London. New members must be proposed by existing members. One of the rules is "Members are expected to converse with each other unless seeking solace behind a newspaper." Another Academy rule is that clothing should be informal, but shoes must be worn.

• **2 Bridges Place**, London WC2. Newcomers must be proposed by four members. Annual membership is £150 a year. Faded, chintzy Bridges Place is a private dining club frequented by many literati.

• **Other London salonières** tend to be located in Chelsea or the environs of Hampstead. They include Sonia Melchett, who presides at The Street, Chelsea (Oscar Wilde's old street); Edna O'Brien who lives in a small, pretty house in Chelsea; John Lahr, who has a converted attic in Belgrave Park; and Felicity Mason (see main article).

Shusha Guppy and Margot Wahneley, whose parties off Kensington High Street are deeply literary, include among their guests Sir Victor and Lady Fritchett, Sir Stephen and Lady Spender, Lizzy Spender, Prof. Vanistart, Professor Norman Stone, Professor William Lewin and his wife Shirley, D.J. Enright, Anthony Thwaite, Sir Peregrine Worsthorne and his wife Lady Lucinda Lambton, Francis King, Arthur Boyd, Professor Maurice Cranston, Miles Kingston, Miriam Gross and Fay Maschler.

Elsewhere, other hosts and hostesses hold court with all the zeal of the great salonières of the past, but few could rival the late Lady Ottoline Morrell, whose guests included Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Lytton Strachey, Asquith, Yeats, Henry James, Aldous and Julian Huxley, Katherine Mansfield, Stanley Spencer, Eddie Sackville-West, Peter Quennell and David Cecil.

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Digging around in past glory

Francesca
Greenoak offers a
short but vital
history lesson



Penelope Hobhouse

Landscape history books never told me what I really wanted to know: the look, the smell, the touch of the garden," observes Penelope Hobhouse, one of our most knowledgeable and intelligent practical gardeners and writers. I understand exactly what she means: reading tells you about the boom-and-bust career of the tulip in 17th-century Holland, and about plant-hunters of North America and Asia. What happened to the plants, how they were adopted into gardens, what the gardens really looked like, remains infuriatingly opaque.

I have been filling in my knowledge piecemeal from old nursery catalogues, journals and letters from the past, and from landscape painting. Ms Hobhouse has been very much more thorough and systematic: for the past two years she has concentrated all her energies into researching the part of plants in garden history, work which she says became obsessive - "totally absorbing and enriching".

She has pulled together all the resources of an already full and rich gardening career, her practical experience in the period garden at Tintinhull in Somerset, explorations of gardens all over Europe and in America, researches into old



Grounds for learning: Tintinhull gardens in Somerset, created by Penelope Hobhouse and her husband, the late Professor John Malins

garden books, pictures and histories. At one point she feared that such a rich diet might pall, preventing a spontaneous response to gardening, but greater knowledge only fuelled her appreciation. Her severe Ulsterwoman's face fills with warmth and enthusiasm as she recalls the pleasure of a particular garden during a recent visit to America.

The past is important in everyday gardening: ornamental plants, trees, fruits and vegetables have cultural resonances that extend for centuries and cross oceans and continents. Knowing a plant's native origins helps you to place it where it will grow best, knowing its history gives your appreciation of it an extra dimension.

As I plant my new tulip bulbs this week, tucking them four to six inches below the surface of my heavy soil in sunny, well-drained beds, I shall think of their ancestors in Turkey and Asia, and of the narrow beds of Dutch gardens, with their proud and expensive inhabitants placed not in regiments as now, but separately so the individual beauty of form could be admired. Modern tulips which are

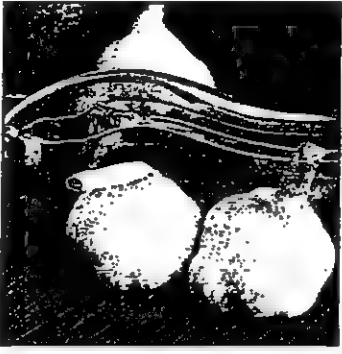
pretty and well-proportioned, such as the pink-flowered New Design with its handsome ivory-streaked leaves (do not be put off by the dull name), look their best, I think, planted in small open groups which similarly show off their elegance.

Everyone knows how laws were passed restricting crazy speculation in tulip bulbs in early 17th-century Holland, but I found it equally fascinating to learn that Albar III, a bold and extravagant gardener who ruled over Turkey in the mid 17th century, ruined himself in purchasing from northern Europe new tulip cultivars, plants which had originated in his own domain. A similar phenomenon happened with North American plants which became popular in their native country only after they had been accepted and cultivated in British gardens.

Plants in Garden History by Penelope Hobhouse is published this week by Pavilion at £40.

BEST BUYS

GARLIC cloves should be planted from now over the next few weeks. Choose good sized cloves and plant them deeply, about 7in apart in a sunny place on well-drained soil. Garlic bought from a seed company is guaranteed virus- and pest-free, and varieties (such as Long Keeper) should have been selected for success in the British climate. It is also possible to get a good crop from a healthy head of garlic bought from a greengrocer.



Clever cloves: plant garlic now

WEEKEND TIPS

- Set up a thermostatically controlled heater in greenhouse or light shed, to keep the temperature above freezing.
- Prepare ground for new trees and shrubs, digging over, weeding and fertilising with bonemeal.
- Protect newly planted evergreen shrubs and conifers with meshed windbreak netting.
- Plant forget-me-nots, wallflowers and polyanthus for next year's spring bedding.

Alan Coren



Clothes
maketh the
man who
keeps their
maker close to
his chest

I am feeling a little horse. That is the kind of rotten joke you think you can get away with if you are feeling a little horse. You feel the little horse and you think, I am Jack the Lad, see my bracelet, no, no, put that away, this is on me, large ones all round, darling, I trust mine host will not object to a platinum card, ha, ha, anyway, about this new Porsche of mine.

The little horse I am feeling is on my left breast, and I am feeling him with my right forefinger. I can feel him because he is made, I am told, of 973 stitches, and he is not just any little horse, either, he is a little polo pony. Or rather, a little Polo pony, because that is the name of the range he is at home on. It was created by, of course, Ralph Lauren, and it is the most famous range of menswear in history. If I walked down the street behind this little horse, anybody who knows anything would know instantly that my shirt was a Ralph Lauren. Even a blind man, were he to stumble against me and put up his hands to steady himself, would feel the little horse, and know.

But what else would they know? I know what they'd think they know, which is, alas, this is the kind of man who wears a Ralph Lauren shirt. That is the reason I have not yet walked down the street in it.

I do not care for badging. If I carry a newspaper, I carry it so folded that its masthead is obscured: display your preferences and unwarranted assumptions may be made. Worse, warranted ones. For the same reason, I detached the manufacturer's label from my car keys and pinned the Florentine signature from my loafers. It's not that I object to advertising their wares, rather that I object to advertising that I wear them, since all advertising is designed to carry associative baggage (so I have also removed the logo from my luggage).

And now I have been given a Ralph Lauren shirt. It is a great shirt, it is the colour of a

weatherworn amphora, it fits a treat, and had I not been given it, I should have had to pay £90 to buy it. But I would not have done that, because it has the little horse on it, and the little horse announces to the world not only that it belongs to a man who pays £90 for a shirt, but that the man wants the world to know he does. Furthermore, it announces that the man has style; he does, mind, not have style, because if he did he would not tell the world he had it.

There is also the problem of the Style he announces he has, for nothing in the entire iconography of chic gives off more ambiguous signals than the little horse: studiously created to exude an air of unsuspectedness, these clothes which at first glance suggest an American fundbroker attempting to pass himself off as an English marquis may, by the second glance, have persuaded us that he is an English marquis attempting to pass himself off as either. Does the man wearing it actually drive a Testarossa between the Gaiety and Cowdray Park, when he is not having his grapes peeled by a resting actress off Cap d'Antibes, or is he merely trying to give the impression that he does? Which of them would you prefer to be stuck in a lift with, anyhow?

And suppose it is some poor sap who happens to have been given the clothes by someone who thinks he is the sort of man who would like to be thought of as one of these, then how is it that he gave off those signals, when in fact he does not want to be thought of as any of them?

I could, I suppose, unpick the 973 stitches. But they might leave a spectral outline which showed what I had done, and what would that advertise? A need to insecure he dared not risk the world's assumptions? One who did dare, but could afford only reject Polo stock?

It's a comfortable shirt, mind. Good to wear around the house. I could always pull a sweater over it, if the doorbell rings.

HOME & GARDEN

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WHAT TO WEAR

The Aussie way to work, rest and play

Clothes designed to be tough enough for the outback are gaining ground as chic and durable British weekend wear, writes Ros Drinkwater

In manners sartorial it is hard to imagine what Anthony Andrews, the quintessential English gentleman, could possibly have in common with Kylie Minogue and a rock band by the name of "Bomb the Base". The answer lies in the far off Australian Outback.

Nostalgia was a key ingredient of Eighties trends; now in the Nineties, retro fashion has taken a politically correct turn with a demand for no-nonsense casual clothing, garments not so much designed as constructed for real men and women. Australian workwear, made with comfort and durability in mind, fits the bill. In increasing numbers, city gents are discovering that drovers' moleskins, stockmen's boots and shearers' jenkins are both smart and practical for British weekend wear.

While Marks & Spencer reports a brisk trade in loggers' plaid (shirts and skirts), purists, including Mr Andrews, Bob Hoskins and journalist John McCarthy head for R.M. Williams in Regent Street. In 1932 stockman Reg Williams started a mail-order business to supply boots, tack and workwear capable of withstanding life in the Australian bush. A string of stores across Australia followed, and the first London branch opened in 1989.

Williams has built his reputation on fine craftsmanship: distinctive oolskins that keep you dry without inner condensation, rabbit-felt bushman hats which work wonderfully in a British downpour, and Moleskin Riders, a welcome alternative to denims. The 100 per cent cotton jeans take their name from the velvety underfinish of the closely woven fabric. It was first imported to Australia by the early British settlers, but while the Brits traditionally wore the soft side on the outside, the Australians wear it next to the skin.



Right
Tartan wool shirt, R.M. Williams, £69.50;
moleskin waistcoat, P.I.L., £59.99; stockman hat, R.M. Williams, £65

Left
Red and black check overshirt, R.M. Williams, £69.50; black wool polo neck, MCS, £19.99; drover hat, R.M. Williams, £65

Below
Ox buckle belt, R.M. Williams, £21.95
Olive corduroy stirrup pants, MCS, £25; Roger boots, P.I.L., £84.99

Designed for riding, moleskins fit firm on the hip and taper to the cuff. In classic bone they look smart worn with a linen shirt and the generously cut, wool and cashmere "Boy-friend" jacket, or, for the more adventurous, a 100 per cent wool overshirt in bright checks.

Williams's best-sellers, however, are the boots, made from one piece of leather with a single seam, for maximum comfort. They come in a variety of styles and a wide range of sizes, widths and toe shapes, from the elastic-sided Bush-

man to the chisel-toed Rough Rider. Sales assistants have to master a manual of fitting instructions before they are allowed near a customer's foot.

Meanwhile, in Covent Garden, rock stars are buying up foresters' boots and miners' jackets. "Function as Fashion" is the logo of the firm P.I.L., founded, like R.M. Williams, on the boot. Three enterprising young Englishmen came across a traditional work boot while on a trip Down Under. Convinced they could sell them in the UK, they returned with the distribution rights and literally touted them, up and down the King's Road until, this year, they had made enough sales to open a retail outlet selling a wide range of boots and Australian workwear aimed at the younger set.

A typical P.I.L. customer might team a carpenter's leather jerkin with a T-shirt, leggings and a pair of steel-capped boots. "In the current economic situation, work clothes strike the right note with our streetwise customers," says spokesperson Sophie Weizman. "They've rejected the whole cult of the designer label in favour of practical clothes in natural fabrics. Kids who have grown up in handmade fibres love pure wool."

With that in mind, I'll leave you with a tip from an Australian shearer: "Wool will not shrink if you wash it cold with as many rinses as you can bear, and allow it to dry naturally for the same amount of time it would need on the sheep's back." Plain common sense, when you think about it.

● R.M. Williams, 179-181 Regent Street, W1 and 15 Kensington Church Street, W8; P.I.L., 61 Neal Street, WC2.

Styling by Ros Drinkwater
Photographed by Dennis McNeelane at Martin Blum's Manor Farm Livery Stables, Richmond Park



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They bounced along untro

David Altheer fully expected an easy ride on the 150-mile Grand Union Canal towpath. Now read on...

Cycling 150 miles through some of the most beautiful parts of England, with no traffic and hardly a hill to climb, should be an impressive yet easy adventure for a 6ft 4in middle-aged weakling, more Wimp's World than Action Man. Furthermore, I could do it without the expensive, all-terrain-conquering gear that no greased-leg, head-down cyclist would use for even a ten-mile journey. I would ride the towpath of the Grand Union Canal, that Georgian-Victorian precursor of the M1 running from Birmingham to the heart of London. I had cycled the canal's towpaths in the capital, so visions of well-laid paths stretched before me. With an overnight stop, the trip might be possible in only two days.

Just in case, I allocated a week's leave. For three weeks before, I worked with a cycle repair group to build a mountain bike, albeit three sizes too small, out of scrap parts. For carrier bags I had a pair of ten-year-old plastic panniers, only just held together by adhesive tape. Into them I jammed a spare set of clothes, a few provisions and basic tools, and some cameras to record my undoubted triumph.

I bought a train ticket to Birmingham plus a £3 permit for the bike, jumped on at Euston and, avoiding Brum's spaghetti junction of canals, took to the canal path a mile from New Street station.

This is the life, I thought, as I bombed along a path well-laid with paving stones and, a few miles on, tarmac. The sun was out and the bike was ticking along wonderfully. It was too good to last. The tarmac turned to broken chunks of bitumen and stone, then I bounced through a series of potholes before the path turned to a rutted track, in parts only 4in wide. This was not the idea at all.

Before long I had my first puncture, which I quickly repaired. Then I had another, and another. The canal was now looking slightly sinister. Huge trees enshrouding it in a cathedral-like gloom were giving me a sense of isolation. I had a good map, but that did not show how far I was from the nearest bicycle shop should I suffer a serious breakdown.

I then suffered a serious breakdown: the roughness of the path and cut-down Hawthorn branches tore the rear tyre to shreds. Fortunately I was near Solihull, and a kind pensioner helped me to get to a high-street cycle shop. I had

read in *The Times* about a new type of solid tyre, so I had no hesitation in forking out the £18 for it. At least that tyre would not puncture. By now the £5 rear carrier holding my panniers had snapped, but tape from my first-aid kit held it together.

Back on the towpath, I started enjoying the scenery again. Squirrels scampered up trees, herons flapped quietly beside me and swans and mallard glided up in the hope of titbits, as I bumped and ground under graceful bridges that were delights of industrial archaeology, some engraved with 19th-century dates. A kingfisher darted along the bank ahead of me. Canal boats chugged along. It was hard to believe I was travelling through one of the most industrialised parts of Britain.

Then I came to the Hazton Locks, known as the Stairway to Heaven, 21 locks descending south by 146ft over a distance of two miles. The locks were widened in the 1930s along with the canal,

and as an example of engineering, they day trip any time.

As I tumbled into Warwick, the pilot from the sights I had tempered by the fact, because of going, I had a about 30 miles.

Bright sunshine started me in. Before long the slipping by... Rington Spa, Napier Braunston, where branch off to Stratford and Leicester. Feel sheepish, I had roads for three miles Braunston because Waterways Board, trols most of Engla had advised me there was overg brambles and Similarly, to avoid long Blisworth tunnel detour by road.

Back on the pattern had begun near towns, the p. had a firm and flat: it invariably petered out one four-mile section there is now a track made it, my wide down a path along wet, heavily grass holed banks. Brax tearing at my legs were marking my weals, but the sheen of riding when had recently been enough to go drove

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I'm not a child, you know

When does adulthood start? In modern Western society, nobody really knows, Louisa Young writes

Puzzled when her 12-year-old son walked off in a huff, a woman asked: "Is that spoilt-little-boy or angst-ridden-adolescent?" A modern Western mother, she genuinely didn't know, couldn't tell. There had been no special occurrence, no rite of passage, to tell her.

Mircea Eliade, professor of the history of religions at the University of Chicago, says that the disappearance of significant rites of initiation is one of the characteristics of the modern world.

Were we the kind of society that does not qualify as "modern", we would have all sorts of ways of celebrating and acknowledging the vicissitudes of adolescence known as puberty. We would be taken out by our big brothers to kill lions, or dragged off by our big sisters to the special place for unclean women before being bathed and ornamented and welcomed as a creature. We might be ritually scarred or ceremonially tattooed. We might be married to the fiancé who had been selected for us many years before. One way or another, all our friends and relations would know for sure that we were, officially, no longer children.

There are a couple of Western rituals that coincide but, compared with the activities of tribal societies, our modern Western ones are negligible.

A Church of England confirmation, for example, is rarely significant to any but those immediately concerned. A private reiteration of faith is a personal thing, and a rocking confirmation party is not common — perhaps because so few people are now confirmed, and if they are it is because the faith is important to them. People get christened and married in church because it is the done thing; confirmations have escaped that fate.

The Jewish equivalent is the bar mitzvah (that mitzvah for girls), a service where adulthood is acknowledged. There at least it is clear when the promotion occurs: at 13 you stand up in the synagogue, read aloud from the Torah in front of everybody and are then declared bar mitzvah by the rabbi. Officially, you are now a man, or a woman, and can enjoy the party.

There used to be no such thing as

adolescence, and puberty was not mentioned. If you were a girl, you were either a child or a grown-up; a daughter or a wife. If you were a boy, one day you were in short trousers, the next you were packed off to school to prepare for being packed off to university/India/the family firm. It was obvious to everyone when the change came, and what signified it. Those, of course, were the lucky ones. The unlucky were down a mine or up a chimney all along, working like adults, washing clothes and scrubbing floors for children who were older than themselves. These had no childhood, let alone adolescence: they were too busy and too poor.

Adolescence was invented, some say, in the 1950s, when it could be afforded.

There was so much money around that capitalism produced this new type of person who would stimulate the markets. Teenagers would need spot cream, rock'n'roll, hair spray and Lambrettas, it was argued. They would crash their parents' cars and want to drink sweet cider. They would strive to be allowed to do what grown-ups did. All good for business.

But when does adolescence start? Is it an individual rite of passage that goes hand-in-hand with puberty? When you're born, you're a baby. You start to toddle, so you're a toddler. Once you talk, you're a child. But how can you tell if you are an adolescent? It certainly does not suddenly all fall into place on the eve of your thirteenth birthday.

Anyways, 13 is too late nowadays. Children reach puberty earlier and earlier. Our bodies know all too well how puberty starts. Are those physical symptoms our modern rites of passage? The future first shave, which we tell nobody about because our bum-fluff is so negligible everybody will howl with laugh-

ter? The first period, even more futuristic? Modern mothers tell their daughters all about it, but only in private. There's no party, no public announcements. The rising of hormones is not an occasion for general celebration.

In other cultures this occasion is often marked. It tends to signify the direct opposite of the search for freedom we associate with adolescence. In traditional Hindu culture a girl's coming to womanhood is time for marriage. In Islam it is time to take the veil.

The veil at least allows some privacy. In Britain we have instead embarrassment. Half the time it is not the youngsters undergoing puberty who are embarrassed by it, but the grown-ups around them. Western adolescents are concerned, above all, with their dignity and getting away with things — stretching the boundaries of their childhood and demanding the freedoms they see as adult.

One woman insists that it was

not her first bra or her first kiss that told her she was on the path, but the first time her mother let her go to Kensington Market on her own. In fact, it was the first time she ever went, because she was far too dignified to go there with her mother. People would have known she was only, well, a child.

It is a time of blushing. Adolescence is when we become self-conscious. The all-consuming tentacles of sex and love and crushes begin to wiggle and wave, we all want to paint our faces and make ourselves lovely. The paradise of childhood is gone.

There you are cavelling away in the church choir when your ambrosial soprano suddenly turns into a badly played saxophone. There you are, like and agile star of the gym team, when suddenly your body starts to cover itself with fleshly curves. There you are, quietly reading your Enid Blyton, when a strange stirring moves you to fling it aside, go to the window and stare moodily out, wondering if you will ever find true love.

And you become conscious that grown-ups look at you differently. They know that you are changing. They look patronising. They say things which make you say things like "I'm not a child, you know!" and "I can look after myself", half-truths struggling to be complete.

As an indication of status, there's always the birthday party. Cakes and jelly give way easily to taking six friends go-karting or to see the new Disney film. Not so easy is the graduation to taking six friends to something with a PG certificate — a argument will ensue. Even that is a doddle compared to the first teenage party at home.

Perhaps this is the true rite of passage, the moment when a 13-year-old can demand cider in the fruit cup and the right to snog. Just so does modern man, Professor Eliade says, see himself as an independent creature. As a society, we think we can look after ourselves. We think we're grown-ups. Meanwhile, somebody up there is probably gazing down at us with a fond and patronising expression.



Face-painting the world over: Western teenagers and a Samburu warrior in Kenya decorate themselves



MY PERFECT WEEKEND

GERALD DURRELL

Zoologist and writer



Where would you go?

To an uninhabited, thickly forested tropical island with a splendid reef. I don't have a special island in mind, but one not covered with tourists who smell of Ambre Solaire and carry large and offensive radios.

How would you get there?

It would be an island without an airstrip, so I would travel by boat, which I enjoy.

Where would you stay?

I would take the camping gear that I have used all over the world, including a tent, a water cooler and a Primus stove.

Who would be your perfect companion?

My wife — she never lets me go anywhere without her as she thinks I am feeble-minded and could not find my way out of a paper bag. The fact that I think the same about her makes us the perfect couple.

What essential piece of clothing or kit would you take?

A loincloth in case of visitors and a top hat in case they are VIPs.

What medicines would you take?

The normal medical kit that I travel with: it contains everything except an iron lung and a head transplant outfit.

What would you have to eat?

I would cook fish that I had caught. I love cooking and would bring with me two huge hampers from Fortnum & Mason filled with masses of spices, curry powder, butter and so on.

What would you have to drink?

A large quantity of Moët & Chandon champagne and some J&B whisky.

Which books would you take to read?

Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, The Oxford English Dictionary and a new book by Dick Francis, who is a splendid writer. I am extremely jealous of his success but, as long as he continues to write, will forgive him all his sins.

What music would you listen to?

Beethoven, Johann Strauss and Barbra Streisand.

What film would you watch?

Citizen Kane, one of the most brilliant films ever made. Failing that, a compilation of Laurel and Hardy films. They were one of the best comic duos to emerge from Hollywood.

Would you play any games or sport?

Hide and seek. What luxury would you take? Two large and good-natured donkeys on which to ride through the forest.

What piece of art would you like to have there?

The forest would be the art. Who would be your least welcome guest?

Practically any *Homo sapiens* you care to name.

Which newspapers or journals would you read?

None.

What three things would you most like to do?

Examine the flora and fauna, snorkel and make love to my wife.

To whom would you send a postcard?

If I had the energy, postcards to all the people I dislike most, saying: "So glad you're not here."

What souvenir would you bring home?

A sunbat.

What would you like to find when you got home?

That all my gravely endangered animals, such as the pink pigeon, Mauritius kestrel, babirusa and Round Island reptile fauna, had given birth to lots of babies; and that no one had written to ask me my opinion on London Zoo.

Interview by Rosanna Greenstreet

Gerald Durrell's latest book, *The Age-Age and I: A Resolute Expedition in Madagascar*, has just been published by HarperCollins (£15.99).

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relaxing in the prestigious ambience provided by Johansens recommended hotels, inns and country houses in Great Britain — and today (on page 17) we offer readers the chance to win weekends at five of these top hotels. The range of choice is vast, with destinations everywhere.

Times readers are also offered three beautifully produced Johansens guides at an exclusive price of £25, a saving of £8.85 on the normal price (see below). Full details of how to apply for your Times Privilege Card, including an application form, appear on page 17.

Johansens Hotels cover an enormous range of countryside and tradition, as this selection of three demonstrates

A gathering in the Scottish Highlands

**Frances Dean
spends a weekend
sampling whisky,
mushrooms and
hospitality north of
the border**

As a small child on Royal Deeside who built the pyramids and you are likely to get the answer "Queen Victoria". The presence of the old queen remains powerful in the Highlands but it is still a surprising answer. Then you realise that around Balmoral the pyramids don't mean the marvels of Gizeh but the pointed stone structures Victoria had erected on top of the hills round her Scottish home.

She rode up many of those hills, accompanied by her Highland servant and good friend John Brown. As she conquered a summit she ordered a pyramid to mark the ascent, generally dedicated to one of her nine children.

There are plenty of hills to choose from in what Victoria called her "dear Paradise". I chose to climb Craigendarroch, which means Hill of the Oaks, though in my case it turned out to be Hill of the Mushrooms.

The name attracted, but a more powerful pull was the superb Craigendarroch Hotel and Country Club and the nearness to Braemar, for I went to the Gathering, held each year on the first Saturday in September.

There has been a house on Craigendarroch for 100 years, but it has become a luxury hotel only in the last eight. The views are grand — when the Prince of Wales dines there as Colonel-in-Chief of the Gordon Highlanders he can see Lochnagar, whose Old Man has been celebrated in print — and so is the food in The Oaks restaurant.

Loch Muick (pronounced Mick) is on the doorstep, too. Just a few

hours after flying to Aberdeen from Heathrow I was walking in the hills and looking down on the loch. Brown peaty streams feed into it. I tasted the whisky-coloured water and it was fine, though my husband claimed the rivulet was probably dammed upstream by a dead sheep.

Soon after that we found the mushrooms, masses of smooth brown bolet, or cepes, camouflaged in earth and dead leaves. We carried armfuls — including the biggest, fattest specimen I had seen in Europe, a monstrous mushroom, a fabulous fungus — back to the hotel kitchens and demanded they cook them for our dinner.

Then we discovered bolet had come out like a plague. They were everywhere, surrounding the dry ski slope, crusting from the grass outside the back door of our room. We felt just a little silly about carrying our hoard back, but all was well.

As the first course of dinner was served in The Oaks that night there was a fire alarm. Guests in evening clothes from the restaurants and guests in swimsuits from the pretty

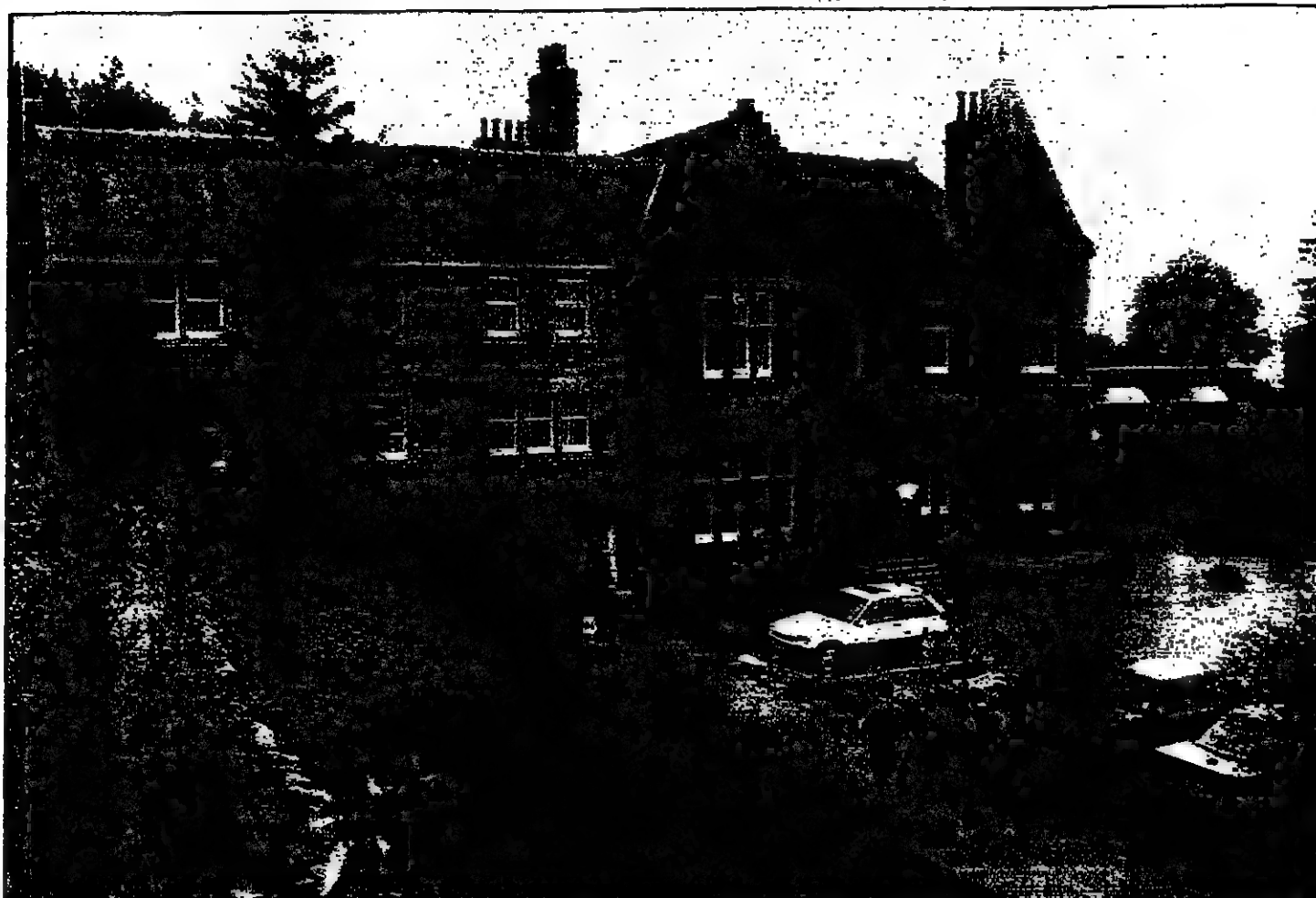
pool collected in the car park. There was no fire, of course. An overkeen smoke detector had needlessly set off the alarm, but the delay had spoiled a gently simmering dish of fish and cepes. Our monster mushroom, finely sliced, triumphantly took over in the replacement dish.

Next day was Braemar, with large and hairy Highlanders hurrying telegraph poles, and men in kilts and curious woollen bloomers wrestling with each other. I said I'd heard the hotel had a tent there and was gently reproved. It was a luxury marquee, not a tent. And so it was, crisp with snowy white napery, resplendent with a carved ice swan. The food was wonderful and champagne and malt whisky flowed in equal quantities.

We could have been much more energetic at Craigendarroch, for they arrange so many activities. You can shoot, you can fish, you can ride. The dry ski slope will prepare you for the real thing at Glen Shee or more distant Aviemore.

The swimming pool is impressive, and is much used by the Balmoral neighbours, including the Princess of Wales and her sons on occasion. (The Deeside mythology is that there is no pool at Balmoral because the Queen does not swim.)

The hotel has its own travel agency, can arrange packages that include transport. The address is Craigendarroch Hotel and Country Club, Braemar Road, Ballater, Royal Deeside, AB55 5XA. The telephone number is 03397 55858.



Welcome in the Highlands: the Craigendarroch Hotel and Country Club combines breathtaking views with traditional cuisine

Bathed in a sense of history

COMBE Grove Manor Hotel and Country Club, an 18th century country house situated two miles from Bath, is built on the hillside site of a Roman settlement. The manor house is set in 68 acres of formal gardens and woodlands. There is an à la carte restaurant, private dining room, wine bar and a restaurant with a terrace garden. After dinner, guests may relax with drinks in either the drawing room or library. The bedrooms all have en suite facilities. Two individually designed suites, complete with Jacuzzis, are available. Within the hotel grounds are some of the finest leisure facilities in the south-west, including indoor and outdoor

(heated) swimming pools, a spa bath and steam room, four all-weather tennis courts, squash courts, a five-hole par three golf course and two-tiered driving range. Visitors may also make use of the Nautilus gym, aerobics studio, saunas and solaria. Separate from the manor house is the garden lodge which has 35 bedrooms.

Combe Grove Manor Hotel and Country Club, Brassknocker Hill, Monkton Combe, Bath, BA2 7HS. (0225 834644). Usual rate: £127.50. Offer rate: £95.63. Average dinner price £25. Offer not available Christmas, New Year or Easter.



Combe Grove: set in 68 acres of formal gardens and woodlands

View the great outdoors

BUILT in 1882, Tre-Ysgawen Hall is set amid beautiful Anglesey countryside with views over Snowdonia. Recently renovated, this hotel offers style, comfort and attentive service. Each bedroom is distinctively styled and all have en suite bathrooms. The menu is changed daily, offering a superb choice of dishes.

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can drive you to the local beauty spots, such as Beaumaris and Caernarfon castles, Portmeirion and the Festiniog railway.

Many sports can be arranged on site or nearby, including dry slope skiing, archery, sailing, parasailing and water-skiing. The hotel also has rights to shooting on 3,000 acre estate. Dogs by prior notice.

Tre-Ysgawen Hall Country House Hotel, Capel Coch, Llangefni, Isle of Anglesey, LL77 7UR (0248 750750).

Usual rate: £76. Offer rate: £57. Average dinner: £19.50. Closed from January 1 to February 12. Not available on bank holidays.



Tre-Ysgawen Hall: situated on the doorstep of Snowdonia



Dry run: a youngster receives some gentle instruction on the ski slope at Craigendarroch

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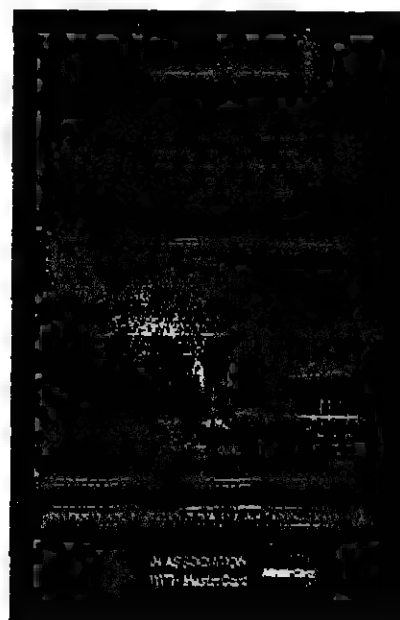
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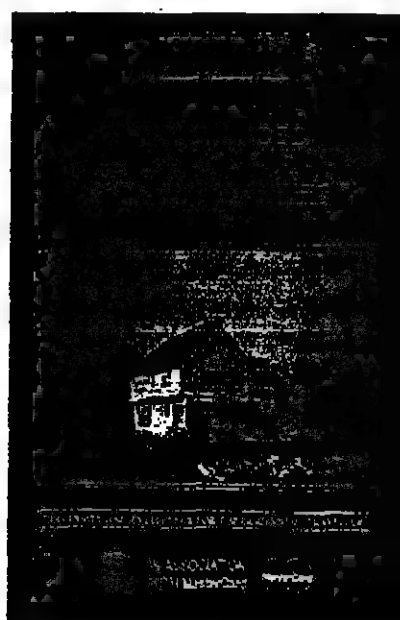
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Johansens Recommended Inns and Restaurants in Great Britain 1993: Featuring centuries-old coaching inns, thatched hostellers and excellent restaurants, this guide contains 150 recommendations. Almost all offer comfortable accommodation at affordable prices, and good food. Guests are assured of a warm welcome. This guide is now in its fifth year of publication.



Johansens Recommended Private Country Houses in Great Britain and Ireland 1993: Containing more than 160 entries, the guide also features some small hotels and a weekly let section. This publication features some real gems, most of which have just a few bedrooms. Many are of significant historical interest and you can expect to stay as one of the family.



Johansens Recommended Hotels in Great Britain and Ireland 1993: There are 428 full-colour entries, ranging from medieval castles to grand country manor hotels and elegant town houses. The 500-page guide contains a selection of London's most splendid hotels. Now in its eleventh year of publication, the hotel guide is a fitting celebration of some of the finest properties to be found in these Isles.

Johansens' philosophy

The Johansens aim is simple: to recommend only the finest establishments, those which offer superior standards and excellence at the right price.

Each recommendation is personally selected for its quality by Johansens' inspectors. Only those establishments attaining the highest possible standards are chosen.

Johansens constantly monitor the selections too, and the 1993 guides reflect this, with many new entries.

Johansens recommendations are not chain hotels. Most are privately owned and independently run, each one unique and full of character.

Whether for business or simply for pleasure, Johansens recommendations await your discovery.

Win a luxury weekend

Today, *The Times* in association with Johansens is offering readers the chance to win a luxury weekend break at one of five carefully selected Johansens properties.

The first prize winner and a partner will be able to enjoy a long weekend of three nights with dinner at Stocks Country House in Aldbury, Hertfordshire. The first mention of the house appeared in 1176. Since then its illustrious history has included a period as a training school for Playboys Bunny girls! Its enviable recreational amenities include riding and livery stables, four all-weather

tennis courts, a gymnasium and the country's largest heated indoor Jacuzzi.

Balloon flights, blindfold driving, laser shooting and archery can also be arranged. Each bedroom is individually appointed. Fine plasterwork, tapestries, crisp linen and porcelain set the tone of the elegant Tapestry Restaurant. With its air of tranquillity, Stocks provides a perfect long weekend.

Four runners-up and their partners will win a two-night weekend break with dinner at one of four Johansens properties (see photographs, right).



A long weekend at Stocks Country House is our first prize: amenities include riding and livery stables, four all-weather tennis courts, a gymnasium and the country's largest heated indoor Jacuzzi. Each bedroom is individually appointed and all offer fine views over the grounds and to the Chilterns beyond.

THE QUESTIONS

1) Once confiscated by Henry VIII, elegant Thornbury Castle boasts many original features from the Tudor period. Can you name the King's third wife?

2) *Cider with Rosie* was based on life in the village of Slad, Gloucestershire close to the palatial Painswick Hotel. Which author wrote this work?

3) Quietly situated in Wimborne Minster, Dorset, is a house close to Poole Harbour, which famous island in the harbour, famous for its wildlife, was the venue for Lord Baden-Powell's first scout camp?

4) The Lakeside Hotel nestles by the banks of Windermere in the

heart of Lakeland. Can you recall the name of the speed ace, fatally injured while attempting to break the water speed record?

5) Which popular television situation comedy featuring Peter Bowles and Penelope Keith was filmed at Cricket St Thomas, close to charming Tytherleigh Cot, the renovated former village cider house?

6) Congham Hall, a stately manor house hotel, is located near to which royal estate in Norfolk?

■ All the prize hotels are participating in *The Times* Johansens Privilege Card offer.

TO ENTER: Study the six questions above and telephone your answers, with your name, address and telephone number, to the number on the right.

The winners will be selected at random from all correct entries telephoned by midnight on Wednesday, October 28, 1992, and notified by telephone. Calls cost 36p per minute, 48p per minute at all other times.

THE NUMBER TO RING:
0891 500106

Entry conditions: Employees (and their relatives) of *The Times* Newspapers Ltd, Johansens or their agents are ineligible. The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence can be entered into. The *Times* competition rules apply and are available on request. Prizes must be taken before March 31, 1993.



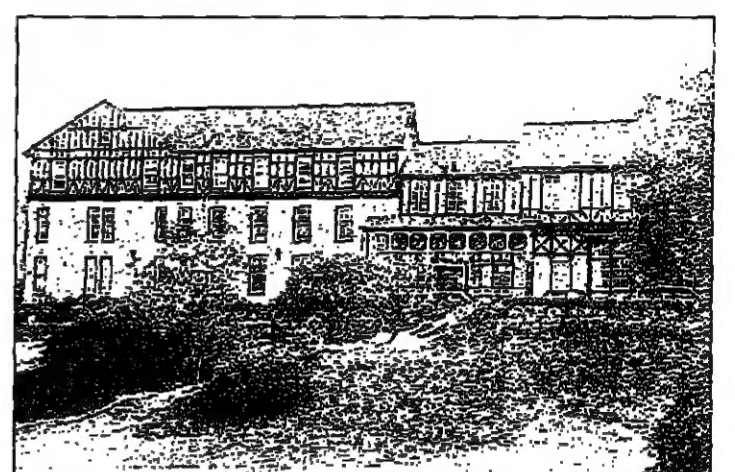
The Grange Hotel: a log fire and deep sofas in the morning room; prints, flowers and English chintz in the bedrooms



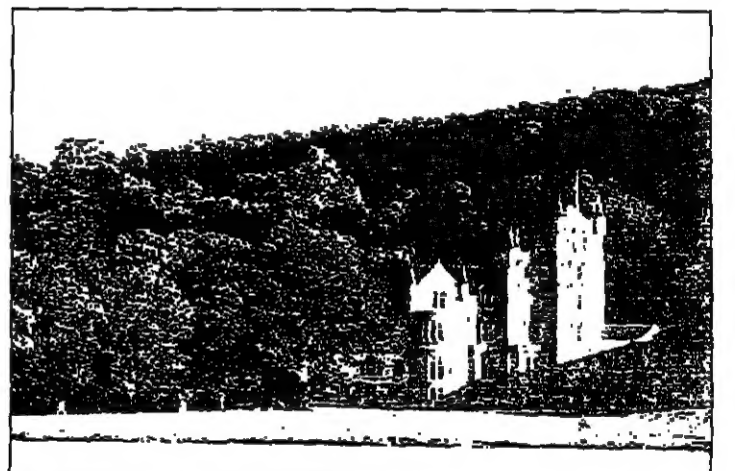
Bishopstrow House: the grace of a Georgian mansion together with modern facilities and an impressive collection of antiques

Our prize hotels

THE Grange Hotel in York is a sophisticated Regency town house which has been carefully restored and its spacious rooms richly decorated. Stone-flagged floors in the corridors lead to classically styled reception rooms; and the chef, Cara Baird, trained at Le Gavroche. Bishopstrow House in Wiltshire was built by John Pinch of Bath in 1817. Bedrooms feature canopied beds, festoon draperies and in some cases private safes. The emphasis is on light, imaginative cooking in the modern style, with English and French dishes prepared by Chris Suter, winner of the Young Chef of the Year Award 1990. The Lake Country House in Llangammarch Wells is hidden away in 50 acres of its own grounds with sweeping lawns, woodlands, rhododendron-lined pathways, and riverside walks. Winner of the 1991 Johansens Best Restaurant of the Year Award, the hotel has its own lake which is well stocked with trout. Finally, Cameron House in Loch Lomond, Dunbartonshire is an impressive baronial house that has lured many famous visitors, from the Empress Eugenie to Sir Winston Churchill. Its 100 acres of lawns and glades sweep down to the shores of Loch Lomond. Cameron House offers luxury, elegance, and recreation of almost every kind.



The Lake Country House: spectacular countryside views and a birdwatcher's paradise, with 94 species of birds recorded here



Cameron House: the indoor leisure club includes squash, badminton and dance facilities and four beauty treatments rooms

LAST WEEK we published a list of more than 180 hotels which are participating in *The Times* Johansens Privilege Card Offer. Today we feature another 22 hotels

SOUTH-WEST

AVON

Eagle House. Church Street, Bathford, BA1 7RS. (0255 859946).
Usual rate: £66.60. Offer rate: £49.95. Dinner not available. Closed from December 21 to January 3.
The hotel offers the use of two 18-gear mountain bikes for one day, with details of Avon and Wiltshire cycle ways, waterproof clothing and two large Mars bars.

The Priory Hotel. Weston Road, Bath, BA1 2XT. (0225 331922).
Usual rate: £205. Offer rate: £150. Average dinner: £29.50.
Offer not available Christmas and New Year. Subject to availability on Friday and Saturday.
The hotel offers two tickets for the Theatre Royal, Bath, plus drinks in the 1805 suite.

DEVON

Alston Hall Country House. Alston, Holbeton, Nr Plymouth, PL8 1HN. (075 530 555).
Usual rate: £65. Offer rate: £48.75. Average dinner: £19.50.
This impressive Edwardian manor house is set in formal gardens with stunning views over rolling hills, and offers a trip to Loddswell vineyard and a presentation case with two Dartington wine glasses.

Holme Chase Hotel. Ashburton, TQ13 7NS. (03643 471).

Usual rate: £85. Offer rate: £61.75. Average dinner: £17.50.
Booking to be confirmed in writing.
Once a hunting estate dating from the 11th century, Holme Chase offers a planter, crafted in the hotel's private workshops using reclaimed timber finished in white, green or black, with advice on planting and special discounts on shrubs.

St Olaves Court Hotel. Mary Arches Street, Exeter, EX4 3AZ. (0392 217736).
Usual rate: £90. Offer rate: £67.50. Average dinner: £20.
The hotel closes from December 24 to January 3, inclusive.
St Olaves offers a welcoming Longhorn cask malt, a hunch at the famous Nobody Inn at Doddyscombeleigh, and a parting gift from Exeter.

SOMERSET

The Anchor Inn Hotel. Exebridge, Nr Dulverton, TA22 9AZ. (0398 23433).
Usual rate: £70. Offer rate: £52.50. Average dinner: £16.50.
Offer not available Christmas, New Year or Easter.
Set in tranquil and unspoilt surroundings on the banks of the River Exe, this comfortable hotel offers either clay pigeon shooting, fishing or horse riding.

The Royal Oak Inn. Winsford, Exmoor National Park, TA24 7JE. (064 385 455).
Usual rate: £90. Offer rate: £67.50. Average dinner: £20.
Offer not available Christmas.

New Year or Easter. Bookings must be confirmed in writing, six weeks prior to arrival, with credit card details.
This picturesque thatched inn, located in the centre of a riverside village on the edge of Exmoor, offers a two-hour safari by Land Rover to see the red deer.

WILTSHIRE

Lackham Park. Colerne, SN14 8AZ. (0225 742777).
Usual rate: £151. Offer rate: £112. Average dinner: £37.50.
Offer not available Christmas, New Year and Easter.
The hotel offers Clarins beauty products or treatments to the value of £50.

MIDLANDS

DERBYSHIRE

Riber Hall. Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 5JU. (0629 582795).
Usual rate: £107. Offer rate: £80.25. Average dinner: £28.
Offer not available Christmas or Easter.
A listed building, Riber Hall has undergone extensive renovations, while retaining many original features, and offers a clay pigeon shooting lesson for two people (100 days) with the chief coach of the British Olympic team.

HEREFORDSHIRE

All-ye-Ynys Country Hotel. Walford, Hereford, HR2 0DU. (0873 890 307).
Usual rate: £70. Offer rate: £52.50. Average dinner: £18.
Please quote *The Times* Johansens offer when booking.
Offer not available December 24-26 inclusive or New Year's Eve.
This 16th-century hotel, which boasts many authentic features such as moulded ceilings and oak panelling and beams, offers an introductory course for two to clay pigeon shooting (25 days) in a fully automatic undercover shooting range situated within the hotel grounds. Guns and cartridges are provided.

The Feathers Hotel. High Street, Ludbury, HR8 1AE. (0531 5266). Usual rate: £85. Offer rate: £63.75. Average dinner: £10.95.

Offer not available Christmas, Easter and the Cheltenham Gold Cup week.
The hotel offers a visit, with tasting, to either the Three Choirs Vineyard or H. Weston and Son cider makers.

OXFORDSHIRE

The Bay Tree Hotel. Sheep Street, Burford, OX18 4LW. (0993 822791).
Usual rate: £99. Offer rate: £74.25. Average dinner: £25.
The offer is not available on bank holidays, or March 9-12 inclusive.
This picturesque Cotswolds hotel has been beautifully refurbished while retaining all its Tudor splendour.
Choose from either: two tickets to an 18-hole golf course at Lymington; two rods at the Lochside Trout Fisheries, with a maximum of six fish per rod — the chef will cook your catch that evening; or one day's bicycle hire for two, with hamper.

The Mill House Hotel. Kington, OX7 6UH. (0608 658188).
Usual rate: £90. Offer rate: £67.50. Average dinner: £18.95.
Offer not available Christmas, New Year, Easter and March 16-18 inclusive.
This former mill, set in seven acres of Cotswolds country and bordered by a trout stream, offers one ticket per person to visit the Cotswold Wildlife Park, a £5 donation in the guest's name to the Kidney Foundation and £40 of wine on departure.

Weston Manor House. Weston on the Green, Oxford, OX6 8QL. (0869 50621).
Usual rate: £105. Offer rate: £78.75. Average dinner: £24.50.
Offer not available December 24-26 and 30-31 inclusive.
Formerly the ancestral home of the Earls of Abingdon and once owned by Henry VIII, this sympathetically restored manor house is delightfully situated in extensive grounds. The hotel offers a tour around "The Oxford Story" followed by "The Oxford Classic Tours", a guide to Oxford's history and its universities.

SHROPSHIRE

Bucktree Hall Hotel. The Wrekin, Wellington, Telford.

TF6 5AL. (0952 641821).
Usual rate: £82. Offer rate: £61.50. Average dinner: £15.50.
Offer not available Christmas and New Year.
The hotel offers a Romeo and Juliet, including a room with balcony, flowers and Black Magic chocolates, pink champagne, a water bed and dinner by candlelight.

THE SOUTH

BERKSHIRE

Hollington House. Church Road, Wootton Hill, Nr Newbury, RG15 9XR. (0635 255100).
Usual rate: £165. Offer rate: £125. Average dinner: £35.
Offer not available Christmas, New Year's Eve and Easter.
Hollington House offers an upgrade to a deluxe junior suite, which features a separate shower and whirlpool bath.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The Priory Hotel. 70-72 High Street, Whitechurch, Aylesbury, HP22 4JS. (0296 641239).
Usual rate: £110. Offer rate: £82.50. Average dinner: £25.50.

£25.50. Offer not available at Christmas time.
Dating back to 1360, this beautifully preserved timber-framed house in the picturesque conservation village of Whitechurch offers either: one hour's personal tuition by Pauline Ricketts in any riding discipline; a day's fly-fishing for trout; or an afternoon's clay pigeon shooting with the current world champion.

KENT

Budds House. Budds Lane, Wittersham, Isle of Oxney, TN32 7EL. (0797 270 204).
Usual rate: £80. Offer rate: £60. Average dinner: £25.
Offer not available Christmas.
The beautifully proportioned rooms all have views over the gardens and surrounding countryside in this charming English country house, which serves only the finest wines. On selected weekends, Budds House offers a luxurious break including individual counselling programmes for couples, with £50 redeemable against the fees for these programmes. Alternatively, a variety of activities (the Isle of Oxney shoot, for example) are offered.

WEST SUSSEX

Amberley Castle. Amberley, Nr Arundel, BN18 9ND. (0798 831902).
Usual rate: £130. Offer rate: £97.50. Average dinner: £25.50.
Offer not available Christmas and New Year. Only available Sunday to Thursday.
The castle offers a half day tour of the South Downs in a Rolls-Royce, a stylish way to see history, heritage and culture.

Chequers Hotel. Church Place, Pulborough, RH20 1AD. (0798 872486).
Usual rate: £65. Offer rate: £48.75. Average dinner: £15.50.
This delightful Queen Anne-listed building, situated 30 minutes from Brighton, with its lanes and regency pavilion, is ideal for visiting Roman Chichester, Arundel Castle and other stately homes. It offers a celebration champagne breakfast, a gourmet dinner at a normal table d'hôte price (not available to guests dining on subsequent nights), and afternoon tea and homemade cake on arrival.

SCOTLAND

Cameron House Hotel and Country Estate. Loch Lomond, Alexandria, Dunbartonshire, G83 8QZ. (0389 55565).
Usual rate: £138. Offer rate: £103.50. Average dinner: £16.
Set in an unrivalled location on the shores of Loch Lomond, this splendid hotel has a wide range of leisure activities and offers a full day's golf pass, including club hire for two, at the hotel's nine-hole "Wee Demon" course, with a complimentary cup of coffee beforehand.

WALES

Caer Beris Manor. Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3NP. (0982 552601).
Usual rate: £67. Offer rate: £50.25. Average dinner: £17.50.
Offer not available Christmas.
Once the home of Lord Swansea, this hotel provides guests with a cosy atmosphere and offers an upgrade to a four-poster room or clay pigeon shooting tuition.

HOW TO APPLY



BY NOW you should have collected six tokens that have appeared in *The Times*. The seventh token appears below today.
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BBC1

- 7.25 Grand Prix. Full coverage of the Japanese grand prix from Suzuka (5580835) 9.10 News and weather (7795787)
- 9.15 Start Your Own Religion. Colin Morris talks about the laws governing religious belief to an audience at Westminster College, Oxford (s) (2629922) Northern Ireland: Duff Sa Duira 9.30 This is the Day. Linda Mary Evans joins Ian and Jennifer Hall at their home in the Lake District (s) (81421)
- 10.00 See Heart Jack Ashley previews programmes for Deaf Awareness Week, which begins tomorrow (s) (21274)
- 10.30 Inside English. How to use language skills (4289531). Wales: Carers' Ahead 10.45 Lingua How To Learn A Language. Last in the series (s) (4263105) 11.00 Caring Ahead. Juliet Alexander looks at how business is affected by the lack of language training (8532). Wales: (to 12.30) See You Sunday 11.30 Winning. David Halls shows a socky-label company in Suffolk how to find new markets (s) (3381)
- 12.00 Spain on a Plate. Maria José Sevilla's gastronomic tour of Spain comes to an end in Andalusia (s) (80854)
- 12.30 Country File with John Craven (8553989). Wales: Down to Earth 12.55 Weather (5346380)
- 1.00 News (2254518) 1.05 On the Record with Jonathan Dimbleby and John Cole (5844477)
- 2.00 EastEnders. Omnibus edition (s) (22903)
- 3.00 Eiderdale (s) (3106)
- 3.30 Film: All Creatures Great and Small (1974). The original film version of James Herriot's vet stories. In 1937 Herriot (Simon Ward) travels to the Yorkshire Dales to start his encounters with the locals and their animals. Directed by Claude Whatham. (CeeFax) (46729)
- 5.00 Motor Show '92. A report from the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham (811663)
- 5.50 The Clothes Show. The latest news from Paris Fashion Week (s) (51832)
- 6.15 Lifetime. Jonathan Dimbleby appeals on behalf of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (s) (88237)
- 6.25 News with Chris Lowe. Weather (76993)
- 6.40 Songs of Praise from Stretton Abbey. (CeeFax) (s) (981106)
- 7.15 Last of the Summer Wine. Bill Owen, Peter Sallis and Brian Wilde star in a new series of Roy Clarke's evergreen comedy. Compo decides to grow old gracefully. (CeeFax) (s) (897816)
- 7.45 The House of Eliott. Polished period drama follows the fortunes of two sisters in the fashion trade. Bess struggles to hold on to her marriage and the business while drifting apart from Evie. (CeeFax) (s) (757125)
- 8.40 Birds of a Feather. More earthy, wise-cracking comedy from Pauline Quirke and Linda Robson as the prison widows (CeeFax) (s) (88253)
- 9.10 News with Michael Burk. (CeeFax) Weather (757800)



Fantasy and reality: Alfred Molina, Jill Gascoine (9.25pm)

- 9.25 Screen One: Trust Me. CHOICE: Alfred Molina, without whom no Screen One season would be complete, plays a boxer who becomes the victim of his own pranks in an inventive comedy-thriller by Tony Sargent. When Germans climbing Everest. But Sargent's screenplay involves round another cast, in which Molina pretends to be a hit-man selling his memoirs and finds himself bumping up against reality. What follows depends largely on misunderstandings and confusion of identity, in other words the staple ingredients of farce. This provides the thought that this piece might have been better as farce, with the pace to match. As it is, the plot contrivances, however skillfully worked, are just a shade laborious when what is needed is, so to speak, some dropping trousers. (CeeFax) (s) (4564274)
- 10.45 Everyman: No Great Trauma? Jill Seward, the victim of the falling vicarage rape case, breaks the silence that usually surrounds this brutal crime to explain the long-term effects of rape (s) (CeeFax) (308583)
- 11.25 Out of the Back of a Lorry. Mike Scott reaches Spain on his journey across Europe by (102407) 1.45s Tamilayan. New drama series set in Pakistan (s) (325593) 12.35am Weather (8721978)

BBC2

- 7.30 Felt: the Cat (5769222) 7.45 Playdays at the Dot Stop (s) (4553380) 8.10 Snuggles (s) (7832495) 8.35 Animal Album with the voice of Derek Griffiths and special guest Don Maclean (s) (s) (1656187) 8.50 Onville and Cuddles (s) (8021233) 8.55 Bites 'Castin' Easterly and Simon Pascoe recycle more household junk (s) (s) (1655835) 9.15 The Legend of Prince Valiant. Animated adventures (s) (1481817) 9.40 The Weather the Better! Game show with Ross King and Ginny Buckley (583629) 10.05 Thundercats. Feline cartoon adventure (s) (7244361) 10.30 Uncle Jack and the Dark Side of the Moon starring Paul Jones (s). (CeeFax) (s) (2255583) 10.35 Blue Peter Omnibus (1040729) 1.45 The O-Zone. A look at the current Abba revival (s) (4781800)
- 12.00 Regional Parliamentary Programme (84986) Northern Ireland: A Room with a View. Wales: Country
- 12.30 Thunderbirds. Gerry Anderson's classic puppet series. This week the Tracy brothers have to avert disaster when a super space ship is on a collision course with the sun (s). (CeeFax) (5344941)
- 1.20 Tennis. Barry Davies presents live coverage of the final of the Midland Bank ladies championship from Brighton (s) (12492729)
- 3.00 Snooker. The opening session of the Rothmans grand prix final from the Hexagon, Reading, introduced by David Vine (31361)
- 5.00 Rugby Special. Chris Rea with highlights of the match between Bath and Oriel in the Courage league; plus the game between Ulster and Australia (s) (2900). Wales: Ireland's Newport
- 6.00 Snooker. Further coverage of the final (s) (554946)
- 6.35 The Money Programme. Tom Madocks reports on the life insurance industry's attempts to get its house in order as the existing system of self-regulation comes under question (802941)
- 7.15 The Living Planet. The Open Ocean. David Attenborough conducts an imaginary journey along the floor of the Pacific revealing the geography of this ancient world as well as its inhabitants (s). (CeeFax) (116729)
- 8.10 Did You See...? Introduced by Jeremy Paxman. The guests are writer Susan Crossland, explorer Matt Dickinson and Joe Whitty, governor of Falmouth Young Offenders' Centre. They will be discussing The Kennedys, Pole to Pole and Crime Story (s) (20545)



Looking good: Yves St Laurent and model in Paris (8.40pm)

- 8.40 The Look. The last programme of the series is a profile of Yves St Laurent, the king of couture. Every year the fashion world holds its breath, wondering if St Laurent will make it to the catwalk, and, despite ill-health and rumour-mongers, he always does (s) (518381)
- 9.30 Building 'Slights'. Europe. Scientist and architect Santiago Calatrava reflects on the Church of Colonia Gueli by one of Spain's most celebrated architects, Antonio Gaudí (745670)
- 9.40 A Word in Your Ear. Roy McGrath is joined by Helen Atkinson-Wood, Steve Stein and Steve Coogan in the guise of Mary Read, a pirate, Nostredamus and Casanova (s) (333769)
- 10.10 Snooker. David Vine introduces the final of the Rothmans grand prix from the Hexagon in Reading (s) (740554)
- 12.00 Grand Prix. Highlights of the Japanese grand prix from Suzuka (s) (9151046). Ends at 12.35am

The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. VideoPlus+ can be used with most video sets. For the programme you wish to record, for more details call VideoPlus on 0800 121 204 (charged at 40p per minute plus 10p per line) or write to VideoPlus, Acorn Ltd, 5 Nory House, Rampton Wharf, London SW11 3TN. VideoPlus+ (TM), PlusCode (TM) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd.

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 TV-am (6643458)
- 9.25 The Disney Club. More fun and games with Richard Orlford, Andrea Boardman and Paul Henry (4470816)
- 10.45 Link. Sam Vasey reports on the fears of those who feel threatened by both the aggressive right and the over-sympathetic left. (Oracle) (4258274)
- 11.00 Morning Worship from St Columba's Church, Rutherglen (50274)
- 12.00 The Human Factor. Helen Shapiro talks to Rosemary Harnall about her life and faith. (Oracle) (75292)
- 12.30 LWT News Weekend (81485)
- 1.00 News with Dermot Mulroney. Weather (7007859) 1.10 Walden Brian Walden interviews Tony Newton, leader of the House of Commons (s) (7426748)
- 2.00 Bullseye. Darts and general knowledge quiz (9767)
- 2.30 The London Match. Live coverage of the match at the Den between Millwall and Wolverhampton Wanderers. Plus highlights of the Southend v Cambridge game (s) (6872280)
- 5.05 Baywatch. The perfectly formed beauties of Los Angeles County hope to save the old life or two (s) (691274)
- 6.00 Animal Country. Desmond Morris and Sarah Kennedy continue their travels through East Anglia and talk to Matthew Kelly about Old English Sheepdogs (598)
- 6.30 News with Dermot Mulroney. Weather (92386) 6.35 LWT News (84759)
- 6.40 Highway. Harry Secombe visits the city of Lincoln. Robert Hardy reads from the works of local poet laureate Alfred Lord Tennyson and Helen Shapiro sings. (Oracle) (s) (956274)
- 7.15 Second Thoughts. A return of Ian Emmerich and Gavin Petrie's comedy starring James Bolam and Lynda Elsbam. While Bill is struggling with working away from home, redundancy and stress, Faith discovers she has to wear glasses and has bought sensible shoes. (Oracle) (s) (615212)
- 7.45 The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: The Mouse in the Corner. The conclusion of this murder story adapted by and starring George Baker. While still believes there is a conspiracy at Peterlee farm. (Oracle) (474187)
- 8.45 London's Burning. Drama series about the lives and work of the firefighters at Blackfriars Fire Station. Reilly and Laura are told that Jamie's only hope is a heart/lung operation (Oracle) (747545)
- 9.45 News with Dermot Mulroney. Weather (92386)
- 10.05 Spitting Image. More cruel lampoons from the latest lookalikes (988458)

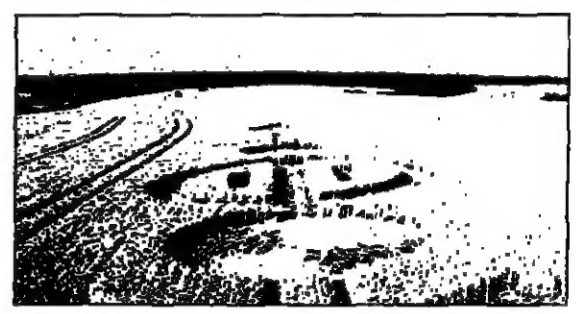


The tall and the short of it: Durante and Russell (10.35pm)

- 10.35 The South Bank Show: Two Royal Ballet Stars. CHOICE: There are no books to play this week in The South Bank Show, just an unpeppered celebration of the renaissance of the Royal Ballet and two of its bright young talents. The short but brilliant careers of Viviana Durante, small and elegant, and Darczy Russell, tall and graceful, are set against an account of the Royal Ballet's talent-spotting system in which many are called but few make it to the final stage. Durante and Russell both got there in their teens. They are presented as the heirs to a great tradition, in which the classical roles are still the touchstone of a ballerina's career. At the same time they emerge as modern women who have shed the mystique of a Pavlova or a Fonteyn and model for the glossy magazines. Generous excerpts from their work fill out a friendly and uncontentious profile (s) (838316)
- 11.35 Celine Dion. Michel Legrand in concert (805564)
- 12.35am News. German debate series (5950201)
- 1.45 The TV Chart Show (s) (212794)
- 2.30 Night Heat. Canadian police drama (8338387)
- 3.55 Pick of the Week. Tina Baker introduces highlights of regional television (33740607)
- 4.20 Out of Limits. Sporting action (9205210)
- 4.30 Memories 1970-1991. Archive film from 1977. Narrated by Robert Powell (s) (51510)
- 5.30 ITV Morning News (55065). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Trans World Sport. Sporting news (s) (84816) 7.00 Take 5. For younger viewers (53361) 7.30 Laurel and Hardy Animated antics of the terrible duo (4559651) 7.35 Little Wonders. Cartoon (533654) 8.00 Sandcastle. Animation (70477) 8.30 Wish Kid. Cartoon adventures of a boy whose wishes come true (821090)
- 8.55 Timin. Animated version of Hergé's classic series (788019)
- 9.25 Laurel and Hardy (2776932)
- 9.30 Dennis. Animated adventures of the mischievous boy and his friends (692999)
- 9.45 Flipper. Adventures of the friendly dolphin (451841)
- 10.15 If Wishes Were Horses (s) (Teletext) (s) (443822)
- 10.45 Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea. Tales of an extraordinary submarine and her captain (233767)
- 11.45 Little House on the Prairie. Trials and tribulations of a close-knit family (22651)
- 12.45 Classic Cars. The first in a six-part series focusing on classic cars and the people who collect them. Today's programme visits beautiful to see the world's biggest automobile, where enthusiasts can rummage for vital spare parts (s) (720583)
- 1.15 Football Italia. Live coverage of the match between Inter Milan and Juventus. Peter Bradley provides the commentary (4742212)
- 3.30 Film: Twice Round the Deodalla (1962, b/w). Comedy charting the comic capers and romantic involvements of patients in the men's ward of a TB sanatorium. Starring Juliet Mills and Donald Sinden. Directed by Gerald Thomas (723380)
- 5.10 Greed and Glory. CHOICE: There continues to be much greed and very little glory in Christopher Hird's disenchanted series about the workings of the City of London. The theme tonight is scandals. With so many ensuing during the past decade, Hird must have been spoiled for choice. He settles for the juicy top of Lloyd's, Robert Maxwell and Guinness. The film is a useful picking over of old bones, enlivened by colourful interviews with figures close to the action. Hird's thesis is that left to itself the City tries to make as much money as possible and never mind the consequences. During the 1980s it was left to itself, subject only to an ill-fated self-regulation which manifested itself in failed deals with abuses until it was too late. There is no evidence that what Hird calls the animal instincts of capitalism will be better controlled in the future (1758664)
- 6.00 Miraculous Mellops. Australian science-fiction series (380)
- 6.30 The Cosby Show. American family comedy show. (Teletext) (632)



Paranormal phenomena or pranks? Crop circles (7.00pm)

- 7.00 Equinox: The Strange Case of Crop Circles. CHOICE: First shown last year and now updated, this entertaining documentary tries to get to the bottom of the corn circles. Little noticed until about 1980, they have been appearing with increasing frequency on the fields of southern England, and, particularly, for some reason, in Wiltshire. Are they, as a physicist, Dr Terence Meaden claims, the result of an atmospheric vortex, or, in plain language, spinning, swirling air? Or do they have a parascientific explanation which puts them in the same category as unidentified flying objects? The film looks searingly at both theories before introducing the hilarious possibility that these perfectly formed geometric shapes are the work of a mischievous prankster. There is no more than a clever leg-pull. (Teletext) (4454)
- 8.00 The Royal Collection: The Kingdom of Nature. Christopher Lloyd, Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, gives a privileged insight into the greatest private collection of paintings in the world. (Teletext) (s) (7545)
- 8.30 American Football. The featured game is the Washington Redskins at the Minnesota Vikings (72203)
- 10.00 Film: Reach for the Sky (1956, b/w). Kenneth More stars as Douglas Bader in this stirring film about the RAF pilot's determination to fly after losing both his legs in an aircraft crash. Directed by Lewis Gilbert. (Teletext) (303903)
- 12.30am Film: A Time To Die (1985). Powerful Latin American drama about a man who returns home after 18 years in prison for murder and finds the sons of his victim bent on revenge. Directed by Jorge Al Triana (740341). Ends at 1.00

VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA
As London except 12.30 Gardening Time (7979748) 12.50-1.00 Anglia News (5979724) 2.00 Cuckoo Time (2795952) 2.10 Wrestling (724147) 2.30-2.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- BORDER
As London except 12.30-1.00 Gardening Time (8458787) 2.00 Chequered Flag (8787) 2.30 The Sky Club (84848) 3.00 Highway to Heaven (2854) 3.30-3.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- CENTRAL
As London except 12.30-1.00 Gardening Time (8458787) 2.00 Chequered Flag (8787) 2.30 The Sky Club (84848) 3.00 Highway to Heaven (2854) 3.30-3.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- HTV WEST
As London except 12.30-1.00 The Nature of Things (5548787) 2.00 Challenge of the Sea (5767) 2.30-2.40 Cuckoo Time (2795952) 2.10 Wrestling (724147) 2.30-2.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- TSW
As London except 12.30-1.00 The Farming Week (8458787) 2.00 On the Hook (8458787) 2.30-2.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- TVS
As London except 12.30-1.00 The Nature of Things (5548787) 2.00 Challenge of the Sea (5767) 2.30-2.40 Cuckoo Time (2795952) 2.10 Wrestling (724147) 2.30-2.40 The Young Reporters (805864)
- TYNE TEES
As London except 12.30-1.00 The Nature of Things (5548787) 2.00 Challenge of the Sea (5767) 2.30-2.40 Cuckoo Time (2795952) 2.10 Wrestling (724147) 2.30-2.40 The Young Reporters (805864)

- The Book Page (8274) 3.30 Alpha. From Hawaii (54128) 5.00 Animal Album (4448) 5.30-5.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 5.45-5.55 The Book Page (8274) 6.00-6.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 6.15-6.25 The Book Page (8274) 6.30-6.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 6.45-6.55 The Book Page (8274) 7.00-7.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 7.15-7.25 The Book Page (8274) 7.30-7.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 7.45-7.55 The Book Page (8274) 8.00-8.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 8.15-8.25 The Book Page (8274) 8.30-8.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 8.45-8.55 The Book Page (8274) 9.00-9.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 9.15-9.25 The Book Page (8274) 9.30-9.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 9.45-9.55 The Book Page (8274) 10.00-10.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 10.15-10.25 The Book Page (8274) 10.30-10.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 10.45-10.55 The Book Page (8274) 11.00-11.10 The Young Reporters (805864) 11.15-11.25 The Book Page (8274) 11.30-11.40 The Young Reporters (805864) 11.45-11.55 The Book Page (8274) 12.00-12.10 The Young 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Testimony of lasting torment

Lynne Truss reviews last night's *Splendid Hearts* and says that just to carve the war dead's names with pride is not enough



A FRIEND of mine works in a studio converted from a church chapel, and on his wall there is a small war memorial. He didn't ask for it, you understand; it just came with the territory, and is presumably included in the rent along with the radiators and the lav. Anyway, carved in stone above his desk are the names of 35 local men who were killed in the Great War, and my friend often looks at it wondering who they all were.

What about these three men with the same surname, he thinks. Were they brothers, or a father and sons? Did they all die together, or did one of them fight on, knowing of the others' deaths? Strange that no relative stepped forward to object when the church conversion removed the memorial from public view. A memorial is surely supposed to be in a public place, proclaiming "Let us not forget". Yet here it is, obviously forgotten.

BBC2's *War and Peace* season, which began a couple of weeks ago and will run until Remembrance Sunday, makes the mystery of my friend's war memorial seem quite urgent somehow. The issue of remembering and forgetting is always there, I suppose, but this does not mean you do not need reminding of it. As the years pass, of course, there are fewer people with real memories of the two world wars, yet at the same time "remembering" has nothing to do with personal memory anyway.

Can you "remember" a war that finished 37 years before your birth? Or ten years? I expect Jung to explain this phenomenon: to do with race-memory, surely (though cynics might object that you can remember historical things from watching *The Time Tunnel*).

I wouldn't want to put words in the mouth of a great psychologist, but if Jung did not say that huge universal bereavements were heritable, then I think he should have. I mean, look at me. Carl. I couldn't tell you a thing about Passchendaele (when, where, why, yet I do remember the dead of this particular world war. I remember them in the sense that they draw on a profound personal grief, which gets steadily worse over time instead of better.

I know I am not mad, by the way, because if other people did not share this emotional Ur-memory, nobody would have made the *War and Peace* series *Splendid Hearts*, which goes out on Fridays. The title refers to an inscription on the war

TV REVIEW

memorial at Grantchester ("Men with Splendid Hearts") and is offered ironically I think, because the programmes effectively peel the names off the memorials, separate them from the fine words, and restore them to real, killed people, remembered for themselves.

Carve their names with pride, certainly, says this series. But that shouldn't be the end of it.

In the first programme ("Grantchester"), for example, an elderly man in a crisp, clean, buttoned-up shirt talked proudly about his older brother, Frank Pawley, who was killed in the first world war, and whose name is read out annually in church, in a list that includes Rupert Brooke. Frank was a gardener; people mixed him up with his twin brother, so they were known as "the Pawley Puzzles".

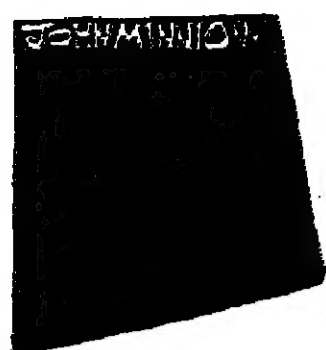
The camera roamed across a collage of Frank's personal effects (telegrams, photos) and it was made very clear that to the people of Grantchester, a real chap like Frank deserved far better than Rupert Brooke to be on the war memorial. After all, not only was Brooke an interloper, but he didn't die in action. And besides, everyone knows who he is.

"Do you remember getting the news of Frank's death?" the interviewer asked Frank's brother; and although the question was not meant to shock, it did, visibly. "Oh, I re-live that," he said, rubbing his face and fighting an evidently great sense of loss. "I'm always re-living that. I was in the last one [second world war], and have two children, but it wasn't like that. Of course, I wasn't very old, you see. And that's always played on my memory."

There is a poem by Keith Douglas entitled "Simplify me when I'm dead". Whether the makers of the *War and Peace* programmes — *Battlecries*, *I Renounce War*, *Splendid Hearts* — were aware of these words I don't know, but they seem to have taken pains to avoid this particular pitfall.

Of course television simplifies (it is a branch of journalism, after all), but what the *War and Peace* season has done is to focus quite narrowly on the pity of war, and explore ranges of human feeling (fear, comradeship, loss), to show that there is nothing simple about it.

For instance, in the first *Battlecries* programme ("Heroes and Cowards"), an ex-RAF man who had suffered paralysing terror on night bombing raids described



Stark symbols of lasting grief: "War memorials exist because there are no graves to visit in the vicinity, or no graves to visit at all"

how he chose to continue flying. The unbearable alternative was to be wordlessly removed from the base, and branded a coward for life. So he came back and carried on — and unsurprisingly made it sound like a great relief when the plane was eventually shot down.

Was this man lacking in moral fibre? When the plane crash-landed, he pulled the engineer out of the blazing wreckage, burning himself badly in the process. Now, if you were going to simplify this story you would not have any trouble. Coward-turns-hero, hurrah. But *Battlecries* left the story open. He said: "I don't think much about courage as a word. I know it's there." And he seemed to have earned the right to this opinion.

Perhaps what makes these testimonies so straightforwardly moving is that the people are not being forced to remember. Repeatedly the interviewees have declared that they honestly do not need remind-

ing, because they remember these awful things every day in any case. For the viewer, this is very reassuring; and it reinforces the sense that war-testimony is something particularly well suited to the medium.

Television usually takes from people; here, it seems to be giving something back. To see the family of Bill Wilson, missing since March 1944, last night tearfully visit his grave in East Germany (they didn't know where he was until the Wall came down) was to experience one of those rare moments when television actually dignifies emotion.

Whether the viewer can stand all this is another question. Other programmes on the first night of *War and Peace* included *Testament of Youth*, *Oh! What a Lovely War* and *Paths of Glory* — enough to induce shell shock in anybody. I would have thought. Next day, I

could scarcely shake off the sensation that I was hanging on the old barbed wire. No *Monocled Mutineer* in the season, you can't help noticing — although images from it sprang to mind a few times in the *Battlecries* programme about deserters being shot by firing squads.

The idea of repeating *Blackadder Goes Forth* on Fridays (*Journeys End* with jokes) is brilliant, because the scripts are about people deranged by fear. The series was inspired, I like to think, by that famous line from somewhere or other: "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, it's possible you haven't quite grasped the situation."

The other thing good television does is tell you things you didn't know. I mean, call me stupid, but somehow I had never properly appreciated a really big fact about the world wars, which is that if you died abroad you didn't come home. I had never quite taken it in that

war memorials exist because there are no graves to visit in the vicinity, or no graves to visit at all.

Last night's *Splendid Hearts* focused on the RAF memorial at Runnymede, Surrey, where there is a list of 20,455 men and women killed in action with no known grave. No wonder the grief lasts forever. There was a man last night whose brother, a Spitfire pilot, had crash-landed in a river in East Sussex in 1942, and it was 44 years before the body was recovered and given a proper burial. Imagine the pain of that; the horror when the digger pulls up the personal effects (cigarette case, cuff-links) of a relative from a depth of 30ft.

No one can tell me we only remember wars we didn't live through because we've seen them on the telly. But when telly helps you understand what it's like to live with real memories of war, it is surely doing a supremely worthwhile thing.

TV PREVIEW

● **Without Walls: Dark Horses** (Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm) Having learnt in previous *Dark Horses* programmes that Shakespeare was gay, and that so was Michelangelo (hence his idiosyncratic depiction of women, as men with breasts stuck on), we now learn that D.H. Lawrence fits into this great tradition somewhere, too. D.H. Lawrence, you say? I don't know why, but this notion cheers me up immensely. I am reminded of a great moment from the American series *Soap*, when Jodie (Billy Crystal) explained to his Aunt Jessica that gayness was not a new concept. "Many great men were gay," he said. "Plato, for example." "No," she gasped. "Mickey Mouse's dog was gay?"

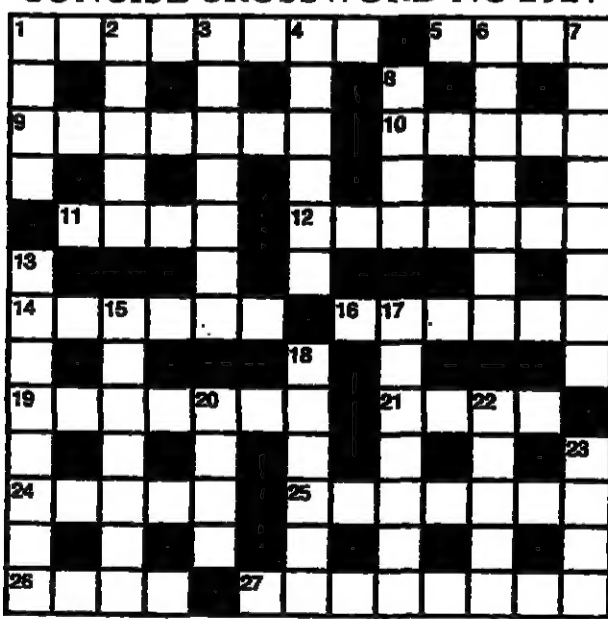
This Lawrence programme, the last in the series, is presented by Howard Schuman, and promises to be the best of the lot. In the other programmes, people have argued that it is the inner struggle with sexuality that produces great art. In Lawrence's case, however, it must have produced something else, and personally I can't wait to find out what it was.

● **Open Space: The Mounttrap** (Wednesday, BBC2, 7.40pm) I can't remember the last time I saw a formal debate on TV, but the idea of pitting Andrea Dworkin against Ann Leslie of the *Daily Mail* in a Cambridge Union debate sounds too good to miss. The subject is political correctness, one of the chattering classes, which for neurotic intellectuals is evidently scoring the act of casual conversation into the equivalent of tipping on order-sticks. Political correctness is big in America, of course, and we have imported it mainly at the level of a joke (don't say "about", say "vertically divergent", he/hy). But we also hear alarming stories about people sacked from jobs for allowing the words "Red Indian" to fill across their minds, which makes us all suck our bottom lip and think "Lolomme". But while opponents of PC push our faces into the hellish prospect of a linguistic thought police, they ought not to ignore the obvious good intentions that paved the way.

● **The Secret Agent** (Wednesday, BBC2, 9.25pm) A classic serial! This fantastically well-cast adaptation of Conrad's novel is the first proper classic serial for years, so we must all watch it diligently (whether it is good or not to ensure that they make more, more, more, David Suchet and Cheryl Campbell head the cast, and I can't tell you how excited I am. My only regret is that I am not reviewing television for the next three months (Nigel Lawson stands in, from November 7), so won't be able to write about it. But I shall look forward to returning in February, if they will have me back.

L.T.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2927



- ACROSS
- 1 Fault finders (8)
 - 5 Edward - nonsense poet (4)
 - 9 Narrative (7)
 - 10 Hurl (5)
 - 11 Chief, leading (4)
 - 12 In all but name (7)
 - 14 Dwell in (6)
 - 16 Warning (6)
 - 19 Blow up (7)
 - 21 Smack (4)
 - 24 Warships group (5)
 - 25 Journalist's treat (7)
 - 26 Whip (4)
 - 27 Space between arches (8)
- DOWN
- 1 Scottish church (4)
 - 2 Film Award (5)
 - 3 Tomato sauce (7)
 - 4 Experience again (6)
 - 6 Gourmet (7)
 - 7 Systematic (8)
 - 8 At a distance (4)
 - 13 Influential (8)
 - 15 Rounded cone tree (7)
 - 17 Yesterday's man (7)
 - 18 Add weight to (4,2)
 - 20 Pledge (4)
 - 22 Warning light (5)
 - 23 Healthy (4)

SOLUTIONS TO 2926
ACROSS: 1 Creature 7 Stall 8 Mongoose 9 Sad 10 Once
11 People 13 Tussle 14 Manic 19 Proved 20 Claim 21 Jar 23
Intervene 24 Range 25 Accursed
DOWN: 1 Comfort 2 Eunuchs 3 Teen 4 Rooted 5 False
6 Blade 7 Stopping 12 Fizzle 15 Illness 16 Commend
17 Septic 18 Fjord 19 Frong 22 Frau

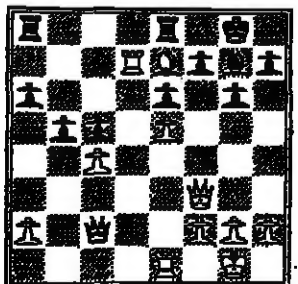
WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Dunhaupt - Kunert, Correspondence 1952/53. Correspondence chess is chess played by post. If black had foreseen white's move here, he could have saved himself a stamp. What is it?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name and address to: *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday next week will win a Batsford chess book. The answer and the winners will be printed in *The Times* on the following Saturday.

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Solution to last Saturday's competition: 1... Qx4. The winners are: D. Knight, Ringstead; J. Malaney, Altrincham; I.R. Gedding, Epsom.

Drop the stuffed tiger

St Etienne vs. *Top of the Pops* — Caitlin Moran referees a mis-match

These Pop Theorists, eh? Not content with standing impassively behind their banks and banks of keyboards and knocking on some of the most Velocro-hooked, hideously successful pop singles ever, they want to ruin the very fabric of the world as we know it.

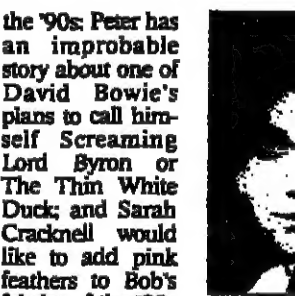
"*Top of the Pops* banned the stuffed tiger," Bob Stanley, the "St" in St Etienne, says. "We submitted a floor plan of what we wanted to do, and they were OK with the gold lame suits, but they just didn't want the tiger."

"We wanted a girl standing behind us, holding a sign, like on the cover of *Forebears Alpha* [St Etienne's debut LP]." Peter Wiggs, the band's token looks-a-bit-like-Mickey-Dolenz-outta-the-Monkees member moans. "They didn't want that, either."

"I wanted seven dancing boys under the age of 16, with long, wispy fringes," Sarah Cracknell, St Etienne's gasp-vocal singer reveals. "But I never got around to telling anyone, so I don't know whether TOTP would've banned it or not."

Don't they realise what they're saying? They're trying to read asunder one of the Few Truths the world is based on — *Top of the Pops* is always boring and dull. You can't start making it look a bit interesting or anything who knows where it could end!

With more viewers, perhaps. Bob used to work for *Melody Maker* and thinks corduroy and velvet are the fabrics for



the '90s. Peter has an improbable story about one of David Bowie's plans to call himself Screaming Lord Byron or The Thin White Duck; and Sarah Cracknell would like to add pink feathers to Bob's fabrics of the '90s list, and can't abide "the absolutely hideous way" she is treated for being blonde and pretty. St Etienne are named after an obscure French football team — or they may be top in the first division; I don't follow sports, preferring instead to have a life — and their reggae/dub version of Neil Young's "Only Love Can Break Your Heart" is one of the sweetest things ever scored into black vinyl. Now you know.

"My solo LP's gonna be called *Life With a Seal*; and the cover's gonna be a picture of a man in an anorak, just holding this seal," are the first words Pete Wiggs/Mickey Dolenz says, after the phrases "A Coke on ice" and "With the salad, please". We're sitting in a "pop-star" café, eating "pop-star" food in the "pop-star" area of somewhere around Charing Cross Road.

St Etienne are vaguely obsessed with "pop-stars", glimmer'n'ack; and are usually

portrayed by the music press as being pop's High Kitch Commissioners — the cover of their *Forebears Alpha* LP was covered in cigarette cards of Man From Uncle and Betty Boop; Keith Richard's purple crushed velvet trousers and how great Kylie Minogue is.

Sarah: "This gets picked up on a lot. One journalist thought we were elitist. You know, unless you [the listener] like all the things we like, you can't be into our music. That's rubbish. It's all very tongue-in-cheek."

The band's solo LPs won't be out for a while, though, for those who were wondering. St Etienne are quite busy. First of all, there's the new single, "Avenue", currently ticking the *Top 40*'s fancy. Then the trio's *Forebears Alpha* LP was nominated for the Mercury Award, against Simply Red,

U2, and the eventual winners, Primal Scream. "We didn't really think we'd win," Bob says. "But we were positive. Primal Scream would, when they were still 8-1 at the bookies."

And then there's surely the strangest thing to happen to the music industry this year — *The Fred EP*. Britain's cutest label, Heavenly, and three of their artists — country-rockers the Rockingbirds, the thuggy pop-bouncers Flowered Up, and St Etienne themselves — have all contributed a cover from ultra-flamboyant Right Said Fred's repertoire, and it's all for charity. Innat nice?

"Richard Fairbrass of Right Said Fred is just totally lovely, nice and a little bit saucy on the side," Sarah coos. "And the video is so funny. We shot it a couple of weeks ago, and Pete [Wiggs] looks like a total pop-star. Millions of housewives will fall in love with him."

St Etienne "do" "I'm Too Sexy" in their own inimitable house-dubish way and, who knows, we may yet see them perform it on *Top of the Pops* — perhaps with the stuffed tiger and seven wispy-fringed little boys.



More tongue in cheek than elite: starry Saint Etienne

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